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**THE INTERNAL BRANDING PRACTICE AND BRANDCITIZENSHIP  
BEHAVIOR: THE MEDIATING EFFECTS OF EMPLOYEE BRAND FIT**



**DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**  
**UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA,**

**THE INTERNAL BRANDING PRACTICE AND  
BRANDCITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR: THE MEDIATING EFFECTS  
OF EMPLOYEE BRAND FIT**



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**Thesis Submitted to  
School of Business Management  
Universiti Utara Malaysia,  
in fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Philosophy**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study examines the determinants of employee brand citizenship behavior (BCB) among employees of telecommunication industry in Nigeria. Primarily, this study explored the role of employee brand fit as a mediator on the relationship between internal branding practices namely brand leadership, brand reward, brand training and brand communication and employee BCB. Partial Least Squares Method (PLS) algorithm and bootstrap techniques were used to test the study hypotheses. The results provided support for most of the hypothesized relationship for the study. Specifically, brand leadership, brand reward, brand training and employee brand fit are significantly and positively related to employee BCB. However, brand communication is found to be insignificant to employee BCB. The results revealed that both transactional and transformational brand leadership have significant impact on employee BCB. However, transformational brand leadership was found to have more significant impact on BCB than transactional brand leadership. Moreover, the results revealed that brand leadership, brand reward and brand communication are significantly and positively significant to employee brand fit. Nevertheless, brand training was found to be insignificant to employee brand fit. Furthermore, the results of mediation indicated that three of the four hypotheses are significant. Therefore, significant positive effects of brand leadership, brand reward, brand training and employee brand fit suggest that the variables are important in motivating and enhancing employee BCB. As such, organization can motivate and encourage their employees to exhibit BCB by improving on these practices. Enhanced performance of brand citizenship behavior is crucial to the success of the brand. Contributions, limitations and implications are discussed.

**Keywords:** internal branding, employee brand fit, employee brand citizenship behaviors

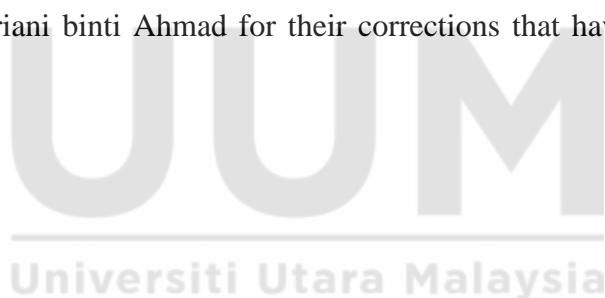
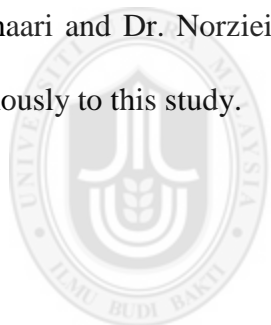
## ABSTRAK

Kajian ini mengkaji penentu tingkah laku jenama kewarganegaraan pekerja (*BCB*) pekerja dalam kalangan pekerja industri telekomunikasi di Nigeria. Pada awalnya, kajian ini menyelidik peranan kesesuaian jenama pekerja sebagai pengantara hubungan antara amalan penjenamaan dalaman iaitu jenama kepimpinan, jenama ganjaran, jenama latihan dan jenama komunikasi dan *BCB* pekerja. Kaedah algoritma *Partial Least Square* (PLS) dan teknik *bootstrap* telah digunakan untuk menguji hipotesis kajian. Hasil kajian menyokong kebanyakan hubungan hipotesis yang dikaji. Secara khususnya, jenama kepimpinan, jenama ganjaran, jenama latihan dan kesesuaian jenama pekerja adalah berkaitan dengan *BCB* pekerja secara ketara dan positif. Walau bagaimanapun, jenama komunikasi didapati tidak ketara kepada *BCB* pekerja. Keputusan mendedahkan bahawa kedua-dua kepimpinan jenama transaksi dan transformasi mempunyai kesan yang besar ke atas *BCB* pekerja. Walau bagaimanapun, kepimpinan jenama transformasi telah didapati mempunyai kesan yang lebih besar ke atas *BCB* daripada kepimpinan jenama urus niaga. Selain itu, hasil kajian menunjukkan jenama kepimpinan, jenama ganjaran, dan jenama komunikasi adalah signifikan dan positif terhadap kesesuaian jenama pekerja. Walau bagaimanapun, jenama latihan didapati tidak signifikan terhadap kesesuaian jenama pekerja. Selain itu, hasil pengantaraan menunjukkan bahawa tiga daripada empat hipotesis adalah signifikan. Oleh itu, kesan signifikan yang positif bagi jenama kepimpinan, jenama ganjaran, jenama latihan dan kesesuaian jenama pekerja mencadangkan bahawa pemboleh ubah adalah penting dalam memotivasi dan meningkatkan *BCB* pekerja. Justeru, organisasi boleh mendorong dan menggalakkan pekerja mereka untuk mempamerkan *BCB* dengan memperbaiki amalan-amalan ini. Peningkatan prestasi *BCB* adalah penting bagi kejayaan jenama tersebut. Sumbangan, batasan dan implikasi turut dibincangkan.

**Kata kunci:** penjenamaan dalaman, kesesuaian jenama pekerja, pekerja jenama kewarganegaraan

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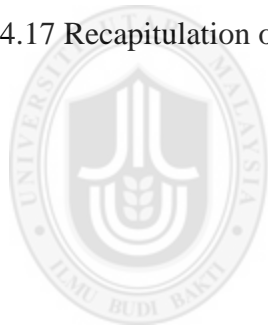


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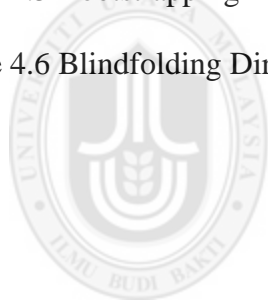
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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

ARPU	Average Revenue per User
AVE	Average Variance Explained
CMV	Common Method Variance
BCB	Brand Citizenship Behavior
BC	Brand Communication
B-E	Brand endorsement
BF	Brand Fit
BHB	Brand Helping Behavior
BL	Brand Leadership
BR	Brand Reward
BT	Brand Training
CR	Composite Reliability
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSM	Global System of Mobile
HCM	Hierarchical Component Model
IMO	Internal Marketing Orientation
LMX	Leadership-member Exchange
NCC	Nigeria Communication Commission
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NITEL	Nigeria Telecommunication Limited
OCB	Organizational Citizenship Behavior
OYAGBS	Othman Yeap Abdullah Graduate School of Business
P-E	Person-environment Fit



PLS	Partial Least Square
SET	Social Exchange Theory
S-D	Self-brand Development
S-P	Sportsmanship
TFL	Transformational Brand Leadership
TSL	Transactional Brand Leadership
VIP	Variance Inflation Factor



# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Brand management has emerged as a significant priority among marketing researchers and practitioners. This is due to the realization that brand is the most valuable intangible asset organizations can manage in order to achieve competitive advantage. Traditionally, organizations focused mainly on their external customers in building and managing their brands (Keller, 2009). However, due to the need to balance internal and external brand management, organizations are now focusing on their internal customers, who are their employees in order to sustain their brands' competitive advantage (Shaari, Salleh, & Hussin, 2011). This is because of the importance of employee's behaviors in achieving competitive advantage particularly during service encounter (Shaari et al., 2011; Burmann & Zeplin, 2005). Nevertheless, most studies focus on the behaviors and contributions made by customers in building a strong brand which resulted in the development of customer-based brand equity (Keller, 2001). Therefore, understanding customer's attitude and behavior, and their contributions to the success of organization's brand have gained considerable attention among practitioners, and marketing researchers (Yoo & Donthu, 2001; Yoo, Donthu, & Lee, 2000; Keller & Lehmann, 2006). Thus, this negates the efforts made by employees in achieving competitive advantage (Shaari, Salleh, & Hussin, 2012).

Employees in an organization are considered as a key resource that organization can use to achieve competitive advantage. Therefore brand management requires significant consideration to be given to employees (King & Grace, 2010). Hence, brand management from internal branding or employee perspective becomes necessary. Because employees are considered as an interface between the internal and the external world, they exert a certain degree of influence on the perception of customers on the brand (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007). Similarly, employees are considered as brand deliverers, therefore their attitudes and behaviors is crucial to the success of the brand (Burmman & Zeplin, 2005; Burmann, Zeplin, & Riley, 2009; Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007). Punjaisri, Wilson, and Evanschitzky (2008) opined that just as employees who are taken care by the organization will have an impact on the way they relate to the customers. Hence, to ensure stable delivery of promised made to customers, internal branding has become necessary for organization particularly service brands.

Consistent with MacLaverty, McQuillan, and Oddie, (2007), an internal brand is considered to be the process of aligning and empowering employees to deliver the promise made to customers in a consistent manner. Through such processes, organizations make certain that the employees comprehend and believe in the values of the brand. As such, this will enable the employee to deliver the brand promise in a consistent manner to meet customer expectations (Burmman & Zeplin, 2005). Equally Burmann and Zeplin (2005) asserted that consistent brand delivery is crucial to the success of the brand, and that such delivery depends on the brand-consistent behaviors of employees. Hence employee brand-consistent behavior is crucial to the brand success.

Internal branding literature has emphasized on the importance of employee brand-consistent behavior for service brands such as telecommunication in building a strong brand (King & Grace, 2009; Punjaisri, Wilson, & Evanschitzky, 2008; King, Grace, & Funk, 2012; Shaari, Salleh, & Hussin, 2013; King & Grace, 2008). Employee brand-consistent behavior can be in-role behavior or extra-role behavior (Shaari et al., 2011). In-role behavior is viewed as the extent to which the employee meets the brand standard approved by the organization while extra-role is the extent to which the employee goes beyond the prescribed standard set up by the organization (Shaari et al., 2015). Therefore, the present study focused on the extra-role behavior which is termed as brand citizenship behavior (BCB) in line with the arguments put forward by Shaari et al (2012). Specifically, employee BCB was considered as it clearly outlined various extra role behaviors employee engage in order to achieve organizational brand goal (Shaari et al. 2012). Employee BCB is considered because it is argued to be more superior in stimulating favorable brand identity (Burmam, Zeplin, & Riley, 2009).

Employee's BCB is viewed as the behavior that employees exhibit that is not prescribed by the organization but is consistent with the brand values so as to achieve brand objectives (Burmam & Zeplin, 2005). It is considered to be the extra-role behavior employee engages, in order to achieve organization's brand goal (King & Grace, 2010). Brand citizenship behavior is a discretionary behavior, which is not acknowledged by formal reward structure but enhances the performance of the organization (Burmam & Zeplin, 2005). King and Grace (2010) maintained that exhibiting BCB by employees is crucial to the success of the brand, as the organization cannot predict all the appropriate

behaviors employees are expected to exhibit in order to achieve organization's brand goal. Therefore, BCB has a great influence on the success of organization's brand.

Brand citizenship behavior has been considered to be superior to in-role behavior particularly in achieving competitive advantage. Organizations sustained competitive advantage through differentiation strategy, and BCB is found to be the best practice for brand differentiation (Shaari et al., 2011). Furthermore, employees that exhibit BCB are found to be avoiding doing anything that may tarnish the brand image and, they spend extra time to achieve organization's brand goal, reduce the variability of service delivery, and deliver brand promise to customers to meet their expectations. As such, it is crucial in maintaining long-term loyalty of customers. Burmann et al., (2009) argued that BCB has an impact on the brand-customer relationship as employees that exhibit such behavior are found to show the willingness to help the customer. Hence, achieving organization's brand goals, particularly among service brands such as telecommunication requires employees to exhibit BCB (Burmann & Zeplin, 2005).

In service organization, delivery brand promise depends largely on employees, as it requires them to exhibit positive brand-consistent behavior (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2011). They further argued just as external branding is important to the brand, internal branding activities are also crucial to the brand success. Review of literature have established the importance of internal branding practices namely brand leadership, brand reward, brand training and brand communication in enhancing and stimulating employee brand fit and BCB (Burmann et al., 2009; Chang, Chiang, & Han, 2012; Chiang, Chang, Han, &

McConville, 2013; Shaari et al., 2012, 2015; Boukis & Gounaris, 2014; Matanda & Ndubisi, 2013). Hence, the recent study is about investigating the impact of internal branding practices on employees BCB through the mechanism of employee brand fit. Exhibiting BCB by employees is considered to have a significant impact on the success of organization's brand. Research has revealed that BCB plays an important part in improving the effectiveness of brand particularly service brands (Burmam & Zeplin 2005; King & Grace 2010; Shaari et al., 2012). The ailing or rather ineffective telecommunication sector of Nigeria is expected to improves their BCB performance when the organization improve its brand leadership, brand reward brand communication and brand training and also provide more motivation to increase employee brand fit.

### **1.3 Problem Statement**

Review of literature has emphasized on the importance of employee's positive brand behaviors and attitudes on the success of the organization. Therefore, exhibiting brand behavior such as BCB is crucial to organization as it has great impact on customer's satisfaction, loyalty and retention. Hence, lack of employee's BCB (unhelpful/negative attitude towards customers, complaining while engaging for brand, lack of self-development) will result in negative customer brand experience which commensurate to customer dissatisfaction, and lack of customer loyalty (Bravo, et al., 2017; Burmann et al., 2009; Burmann & Zeplin, 2005; King & Grace, 2012; Morhart et al., 2009).

However, customers in the telecommunication industry have complaint on employee inconsistent behavior such been disrespectful, insulting, rude, ignoring complains

(unhelpful), unfriendly, incompetent, and also clueless. Specifically, studies conducted have revealed that employees brand behavior is among the factors that affect the Nigeria telecommunication customers' overall satisfaction (Alabar, Egena, & Gbande, 2014). In their study, Joseph, Bruno, and Martin (2014) revealed that about 40% of customers are not satisfied with the interaction skills of employees in the telecommunication sector in Nigeria. Moreover, Adeleke and Aminu (2012) revealed that about 70% of customers have expressed their dissatisfaction with the employee's behavior in the telecommunication industry. Consequently, this has a great impact on the ability of the operators to maintain their existing customers (Egene, 2013). In their report, NCC, (2016) reported that about 434,883 customers have switched from one service provider to another. Furthermore, empirical study undertaken by Alabar et al. (2014) where it was revealed that about 75% of the respondents are not satisfied with the services delivered by the telecommunication organizations in Nigeria.

In addition, lack of customer loyalty is also considered as a major problem encountered by the telecommunication industry of Nigeria, consequently, affecting their Average Revenue per User (ARPU) which has reduced by 13% (Adepetun, 2015). Specifically, MTN which controls over 40% of the Nigeria telecommunication markets and consider it to be the biggest market for them make more money per user in smaller markets have less number of subscribers compare to Nigeria (Okunola, 2017). Therefore, none of the first 3 countries that have the highest ARPU for MTN are near to Nigeria in terms of subscribers as depicted in Table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1

*MTN Average Revenue per User*

<b>S/No</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>ARPU</b>
1	Cyprus	\$ 17.10
2	Swaziland	\$ 7.75
3	South Africa	\$ 6.86
4	Congo Brazzaville	\$ 6.51
5	Botswana	\$ 6.17
6	Benin Republic	\$ 5.30
7	Nigeria	\$ 3.60

Source: Okunola, (2017)

However, employees in the telecommunication industry have attributed the poor customer service delivery to bad working condition, as they have expressed dissatisfaction with the way they are been treated by the organization (Oyetunde, 2016; James, James, & Oyetunde, 2013). In particular, the employees have viewed their inputs has been under rewarded which have great impact on their attitudes and behaviors (Oyetunde, 2016, James et al, 2013). In a particular study, 50% of employees revealed that they are underpaid compared to their inputs in achieving brand goals (James et al., 2013). Furthermore, employees in the telecommunication are not well trained and the frequency of the training have also been reduced as shown on Table 1.2 below.

Table 1.2

*Frequency of Brand Training*

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>
2013-2014	Monthly
2014-2015	Quarterly
2015-2016	Semi-annually to yearly

Source: MTN Nigeria/Globacom Nigeria



Poor information dissemination has been considered to be another problem facing the employee's attitude and behavior in the industry. Specifically, the non-response to complaints by contact employees is as a result of poor information dissemination of brand promise made to consumers (Matthew, 2015). Therefore, it is important for the management of the organizations in the industry to find means to stimulate and enhance employees positive brand behavior such as BCB.

Furthermore, a review of literature has shown that studies on employee's BCB within the service sector, particularly telecommunication in Nigeria are limited. Most of the studies were mainly conducted in the Western and Asian countries (Burmam et al., 2009; Shaari et al., 2012; 2015). Similarly, most of the studies conducted in the Nigerian telecommunication industry have focused on studying customer's brand satisfaction and loyalty (Adeleke, and Aminu, 2012; Ojo, 2010) and organizational citizenship behavior (Bambale, 2013; Bambale, Shamsudin, & Subramaniam, 2012).

Despite the growing number of empirical research in internal branding practices that aimed to align the behaviors of employees, (Burmam & Zeplin, 2005; Morhart, Herzog, & Tomczak, 2009; Punjaisri, et al., 2009) there are minimal studies that link internal branding practices and employee brand citizenship behaviors (Shaari et al., 2012). As such, there are still gaps in literature that are not well-addressed; therefore the present study attempts to bridge the gaps.

The relationship between internal branding practices (brand leadership, brand reward, brand training, and brand communication) and employee brand fit on employee BCB was not tested simultaneously by past research. One of the prominent studies that attempted to examine the influence of practices such as brand communication and leadership on BCB is Burmann et al., (2009). The study failed to provide an empirical indication of the direct relationship between these practices and employee BCB. Furthermore, Shaari et al. (2012) attempted to explore the relationship between internal branding practices (brand reward and brand knowledge) on employee BCB through a mechanism of brand commitment. The study revealed a significant relationship between brand reward and employee BCB. However, the study did not include other practices such as brand leadership, brand communication and brand training. Furthermore, the study suggests further research to be conducted to further validate the concept of employee BCB in another context.

In addition, Shaari et al. (2015) revealed a significant relationship between brand leadership and BCB. Further research was suggested to include other practices such as brand reward, brand training and brand communication, henceforth the current study aimed to fill the identified gap. In the same vein, Chang, et al (2012) investigated the mediating influence of psychological ownership on the connection between practices such as reward, training and brand centered selection and evaluation and employee's BCB. The study revealed a partial mediating effect of psychological ownership on the connection between brand reward, brand training, and employee BCB. Since studies on internal branding and BCB are still limited (Shaari et al. 2012; 2015; Morhart et al.,

2009), more research is required to fully comprehend the connection between internal branding and to further validate the concept of BCB by investigating their connection in a different setting (Burmman et al., 2009; Shaari et al 2012). Based on these theoretical gaps in literature, the present study is aimed at investigating the impact of internal branding practices such as brand leadership, brand reward, brand training and brand communication on employee BCB.

Additionally, the review of literature has revealed that the link between internal branding practices and employee BCB is not only direct but indirect (Burmman et al. 2009; Shaari et al. 2012; Chang et al. 2012; Chiang et al. 2013). It was demonstrated that internal branding practices were related to employee BCB through mechanisms such as brand psychological ownership (Chang et al. 2012; Chiang et al. 2013) and, brand commitment (Shaari et al. 2012; Burmann et al., 2009). Nevertheless, so far the connection between employee brand fit, internal branding practice and employee's BCB in one single model is missing in literatures. In particular, employee brand fit was argued to be an important mediating variable between internal branding and other employee brand related outcomes such as brand building behavior (in-role and extra role), intention to stay, and employee satisfaction (Boukis et al 2014; Matanda & Ndubusi 2013). Furthermore, based on the partial mediation of the tested variables, recommendations for further studies to test the influence of employee brand fit on BCB was made by Chang et al. (2012) to gain more understanding of internal branding. Hence, this study introduces employee brand fit as a possible mediating variable between internal branding practices and employee's BCB.

Previous studies have demonstrated that employee brand fit has great impact on employee's perception of the brand, hence, is positively related to brand identification, commitment job satisfaction, and brand citizenship behavior (Yaniv & Farkas, 2005; Silverthorne, 2004; Löhndorf & Diamantopoulos, 2014; Gammoh, L. Mallin, & Bolman Pullins, 2014; Helm, Renk, & Mishra, 2016; Vondey, 2008). Furthermore, it was argued that positive attitudes and behaviors and other employee related outcomes are as a result of fit the employee has with the organization (Edwards, 1996; Edwards et al., 1999). In particular, Lauver and Kristof-Brown, (2001) revealed significant connection between brand fit and extra role behavior. They further argued that the higher the brand fit the more likely employee engage in extra role behavior. Nevertheless, it has been clearly explained that organizations with internal branding mind set will focus on the needs and wants of their employees so as to enhance their fit with the organization in order to encourage employee's BCB. In particular, organization's ability to enhance and encourage brand fit and employee's BCB depends largely on internal branding practices they adopted (Boukis, Gounaris, & Lings, 2017; Boukis, Kostopoulos, & Katsaridou, 2014; Burmann & Zeplin, 2005).

Therefore, combination of these practices is expected to enhance and stimulate employee's brand fit. In line with these arguments, the current study consider employee brand fit as a possible mechanism through which internal branding practices can influence employee's BCB. .Considering the gaps in the literature, the recent study attempts to fill the identified gaps on predicting employee's BCB investigate the

mediating effect of employee brand fit on the connection between internal branding practices and BCB.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

Based on the above problem highlighted, the following research questions are derived to facilitate the research.

1. Does internal branding practices (brand leadership, brand reward, and brand training and brand communication) have a significant relationship with brand citizenship behavior?
2. Does internal branding practice (brand leadership, brand reward, and brand training and brand communication) have a significant relationship with employee brand fit?
3. Does employee brand fit have a significant relationship with brand citizenship behavior?
4. Does employee brand fit mediate the relationship between internal branding practice (brand leadership, brand reward, brand training and brand communication) and employee's brand citizenship behavior?

#### **1.5 Research objectives**

The main objective of the recent study is to investigate the connection between internal branding practices and employee's BCB through the mechanism of employee brand fit, specifically the study investigates the Nigerian telecommunication sector. Other specific objectives include:

1. To investigate the relationship between internal branding practices (brand leadership, brand reward brand training and brand communication) and brand citizenship behavior.
2. To determine the relationship between internal branding practice (brand leadership, brand reward, brand training and brand communication) and employee brand fit.
3. To examine the relationship between employee brand fit and employee brand citizenship behavior.
4. To investigate the mediating role of employee brand fit on the relationship between internal branding practice (brand leadership, brand reward, brand training and brand communication) and brand citizenship behavior.

## **1.6 Significance of the study**

The study has offered theoretical, and practical contributions in the area of brand management, specifically on the contribution of employee to brand success.

### **1.6.1 Theoretical Contribution**

Theoretically, the study has offered several contributions to the internal branding literature. The present study has contributed by empirically testing the connection between four internal branding practices on employee's BCB. Previous research has stressed the importance of internal branding practices in enhancing employee's BCB. However, many studies examined one or few practices on BCB and neglected the combination of these practices on one single model as predictors of employee BCB. The study is one of the few studies that investigated the effect of these four practices on BCB (Shaari et al., 2012; Morhart et al., 2009). Furthermore, the study has contributed by

providing more understanding of the connection between internal branding practices and employee's BCB in a different context.

Additionally, the study has contributed to the internal branding literature by empirically investigating the relationship between internal branding practice such as brand leadership, brand reward, brand training, brand communication and employee brand fit. Similarly, the study has contributed by further confirming the construct of employee BCB as suggested by Shaari et al. (2012). As such, it can be concluded that the study has theoretically contributed by further validating the instrument used by Shaari et al., (2012). Similarly, past studies examined on employee brand citizenship behavior by including only frontline employees in their population and sample. In this study, both frontline and backstage employees are included in the population and sample as all employees are considered to play an important role in building and managing strong brand (Shaari et al., 2012). And lastly, the operationalization of employee brand citizenship behavior and employee brand fit has provided more insights into the understanding of the concepts.

Equally, the study has used equity theory to investigate the predictors of employee brand fit and employee BCB. Therefore, the result in this study has further provide support to the theory by examining the mediating effect of employee brand fit on the connection between internal branding practices and employee BCB in the Nigerian context. In this study, it is postulated that where employee's inputs such as skills, ability, and compliance to brand policy equate organizational outputs such as fair reward, appropriate brand

leadership style, required brand training, and adequate brand communication employee brand fit would be enhanced which serve as a motivation to exhibit BCB.

### **1.6.2 Practical Contribution**

In a practical sense, generally, the study is important for the telecommunication sector by providing insights into the mechanisms through employee's BCB can be enhanced. Findings of the study have provided directions and guides to be followed by the management of the companies in the telecommunication sector to elicit employee BCB. Specifically, the study has provides important managerial tips for the efficient functioning of ineffective and inefficient telecommunication sector of Nigeria by revealing better strategies to be followed to enhance employee brand fit as well as encouraging employees to exhibit BCB. With internal branding practices in place, the ailing telecommunication sector could motivate the development of brand fit and positive BCB among employees. The study has also provided the operators in the industry with the possible needs to improve on internal branding, so as to encourage their employees to exhibit BCB.

### **1.7 Scope of the study**

The study mainly focused on internal brand management from employee branding perspective. And in particular, the study adapted the internal branding practices suggested by Macleverty et al (2007) which include brand leadership, brand reward, brand training and brand communication as predictors of employee brand fit and BCB. In this study practice such as brand recruitment was not included as they are considered to be more



relevant to employer branding perspective (Shaari et al. 2012). In addition, employee BCB was considered as a multi-dimensional construct consisting of 4 dimensions in line with Shaari et al (2012). Specifically, the study adapted four dimensions of Shaari et al (2012) as the measure of employee BCB was argued to depend on context and the nature of the study, therefore there is no universal measures for the construct.

Therefore, the study has investigated the mediating effect of employee brand fit on the connection between internal branding practices and brand citizenship behavior (BCB) among employees of the Nigeria telecommunication sector. Telecommunication companies are chosen because the industry is considered to be highly competitive and there is also a constant interaction between employees and customers. Hence, in order to achieve competitive advantage, employees are required to exhibit positive brand behavior particularly BCB. The study was conducted on the employees of telecommunication sector which operate in Kano. In particular, Kano is chosen because it has the highest number of customers in the northern region and the operators have their regional offices in the state (NBS, 2016).

Specifically, the study focused on employees from operators such as MTN, Glo, Airtel, Etisalat, Vodafone and Multilink. Therefore, mobile and fixed telephony operators were included in the study as they are considered to be strong brands and also have evidence of internal branding practices as part of the management effort to encourage brand consistent behavior. And similarly, due to smaller number of operators in Nigerian context, the study considers the six operators for generalization of research findings.

Furthermore, frontline and backstage employees are the unit of analysis, based on the argument put forward by Burmann et al., (2009) and Shaari et al., (2012) that all employees are important to the success of the organization's brand. In particular, all the employees are considered to be crucial to the brand success (Aurand et al., 2005; Yang, Wan, & Wu, 2015).

## **1.8 Definition of Key Terms**

### **Employee Brand Citizenship Behavior**

Employee's BCB is defined as behaviors that employees exhibit on voluntary basis to project a number of generic employee's behaviors that enhance the brand identity. Following Shaari et al., (2012) employee BCB consist of four dimensions namely helping behavior, sportsmanship, brand endorsement and self-development.

- Helping behavior is refers to as the extent to which employee have positive attitude, friendliness, and helpfulness towards colleagues and customers of the brand.
- Sportsmanship is associated with employees' engagement to the brand without complaining even if such may cause inconvenience and also willing to engage for the brand at high cost.
- Brand endorsement refers to the extent to which the employee recommends the brand to others in a non-job-related situation for example to a friend; passing on brand identity to new comers in the organization.

- Self-development refers to employee's willingness to continuously enhance brand-related skills.

### **Internal Branding Practices**

Internal branding is defined as a set of strategic processes that is aimed at aligning and empowering employees to deliver the appropriate customer experience in a consistent fashion as proposed by MacLavery et al., (2007). These processes include but not limited to brand leadership, brand reward, brand training, and brand communication.

### **Brand leadership**

Brand leadership is defined as the approach or style a leader used to motivate his or her followers (employees) to engage or exhibit brand consistent behavior (BCB) in order to achieve organization's brand goal. In line with Morhart et al., (2009) brand leadership consist of two styles namely transformational brand leadership and transactional brand leadership.

- Transformational brand leadership is defined as leader's approach to motivate his/her followers to act on behalf of corporate brand by appealing to their values and personal conviction.
- Transactional brand leadership is defined as leaders' approach to motivate his/her followers to act on behalf of corporate brand by emphasizing to a contingency rationale in follower's minds.

### **Brand Reward**

Brand reward is defined as the extent to which employee in an organization is rewarded and recognized for engaging in brand consistent behavior in order to achieve organization's brand goal (Shaari et al.,2012).

### **Brand Training**

Brand training is defined as the systematic and planned effort by organization to develop and provide employees with brand knowledge as well as skills needed toward enhancing his or her brand-consistent behavior in order to achieve brand goals (Chang et al., 2012).

### **Brand Communication**

Brand communication is defined as a process or method organization follow to provide employees with brand knowledge to enhance their brand-consistent behavior (Chiang et al., 2013).

### **Employee Brand Fit**

Employee brand fit is viewed as the compatibility between individual and the organization or brand that occurs when at least one entity provides what the other needs or they share similar values or both (Boukis et al., 2014).

## **1.9 Organization of the Thesis**

The present study is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 the general introduction of the study and Chapter 2 focuses mainly on review of related literatures on employee

BCB, internal branding practices (brand leadership, brand reward, brand training, and brand communication) and employee brand fit. Specifically, the chapter contains review of empirical findings and methods as to the connection between the practices and employee BCB. In addition, the underpinning theory, hypotheses development, conceptual framework, and theoretical frame work were discussed in the chapter.

Chapter 3 discussed the research methodology of the study. In the chapter, research design, population, sample size, sampling procedure data collection procedure and operationalization of research variables were describe in the chapter. The chapter also discussed the method of data analysis and statistical package used in the study. And lastly, in the chapter reliability test of pilot study was discussed.

Chapter 4 in this study the chapter focused on the statistical data analysis of the data obtained, including the data examination, screening and preparation. Furthermore, outer model (measurement model) as well as inner model (structural model) was evaluated using PLS-SEM. By means of SmartPLS.3.0 software packages data were analyzed and reported in the chapter. Consequently, the final results based on the structural model are reported.

In Chapter 5 research findings based on research hypotheses and objectives were discussed. Additionally, the chapter discussed theoretical, methodological and practical influences and implications of the findings of this study. Similarly, limitations and

recommendations for forthcoming research direction were discussed in the chapter.

Finally, the chapter provides conclusion/inference of the study.



## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

In the chapter, related literature on brand citizenship behavior was reviewed and major findings, methodologies, and conclusions of existing research work related to this study were carefully reviewed. This is done in order to give an idea of specific areas of the study that require new or additional research work.

#### **2.2 An Overview of the Nigeria Telecommunication Industry**

In Nigeria, the telecommunication industry has undergone a series of developmental efforts by the government in an attempt to ensure service is available and to provide quality service to the consumers. This development is said to have started prior to 1960 when Nigeria achieved independence. Prior to the deregulation of the industry, the provision of telecom service was monopolized by the Nigeria telecommunication limited (NITEL). In 1992, the Federal Government established the Nigeria Communication Commission (NCC) in order to regulate the entire activities of the Nigeria telecommunication services (Adeleke, & Aminu, 2012).

With the advent of democratic government in May 1999, the sector witnessed another development with the participation of private companies in the provision of quality service to Nigerian consumers. This development sees the launching of Global System of Mobile (GSM) communication in 2001. NCC granted licenses to three service providers namely MTN, Econet (now Airtel), and Mtel in 2001, with Globacom and Etisalat joining

in 2003. The Nigerian telecom industry is now driven by four GSM operators, namely, (MTN, Glo, Airtel, and Etisalat) and two fixed telephony/CDMA operators which are (Vodafone and Multilinks).

With this development, the sector has achieved over 146 million active lines in the country as at May, 2015 as compared to 400,000 lines before the launching of GSM in the sector. The development led to competition between the operators, since each pursues different strategies in order to achieve competitive advantage. The market is controlled by GSM operators with MTN as the leading provider controlling over 40% of the market. Overall, the GSM market segment controls almost 95% while fixed telephony/CDMA controls only 5% (NCC, 2014).

In Nigeria, telecommunication is vital for social and economic development. The sector is equally important as other sectors such as agriculture, health, tourism, education, commercial, and financial as these sectors require proper telecommunication infrastructures in order to function effectively (Ijewere, 2012). Today, communication is seen as a driver of any economy. Emphasis is now placed on Information and Communication Technology for socio-economic development of a country which Nigeria is not left behind. Hence, the sector has made a lot of contribution to the economic growth of Nigeria.

According to Elebeke, Udofia, and Iruoma (2015), the sector has attracted an investment of over 6 billion U.S dollar between 2011 and 2013 and has greatly increased the number



of employed people in the country. According to Danbatta(2016) the current telecommunication industry investment has reached 32 US Dollars. Furthermore, the sector is the leading contributor to the Foreign Direct Investment from 2011 to 2013, contributing about 24% of such project. Since 2001, the sector has been the second major contributor of Foreign Direct Investment next to the oil and gas industry in Nigeria. The sector has contributed immensely to the increase in business activities in Nigeria, hence, leading to the growth of the economy (Ijewere, 2012). Nigerian communication commission (NCC) (2015) reported that telecommunication industry has a contribution of about 7.6% to the national GDP as at 2014. The contribution made to GDP is expected to rise to 25% by 2025. In their report by National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2015), it was revealed that the telecommunication sector has recorded an increase of active lines by 11.3% which gave a total of active lines to 146 million.

In particular, the Nigerian telecommunication industry was considered in the study based on the fact that it is regarded as the most vibrant industry in the Nigerian context therefore the companies are faced with high competition. Hence, one of the challenges facing the operators in the industry is how to achieve competitive advantage. Reviews of literature have shown that achieving competitive advantage requires organizations to deliver brand promise to customers in consistent manner and such require employee to behave consistent with the brand value. Therefore, service providers in the industry are expected to encourage employee to exhibit consistent behavior such as BCB as it is consider being superior in achieving brand differentiation.

### 2.3 Brand citizenship behavior

The concept of employee's BCB was first coined by Burmann and Zeplin (2005), which was derived from organizational citizenship behavior OCB. The researchers posited that BCB is different from OCB. It was argued that brand citizenship behavior is considered to be externally targeted behavior, while organizational citizenship behavior is internal targeted behavior. Therefore, organizational citizenship behavior is beneficial to organization as it enhance the general performance of the organization (Shaari et al., 2012). On the other hand, BCB is seen as brand-oriented behaviors that comprise not only intra-organizational behavior but also externally targeted behaviors. Figure 2.1 below show the relationship between the two constructs.

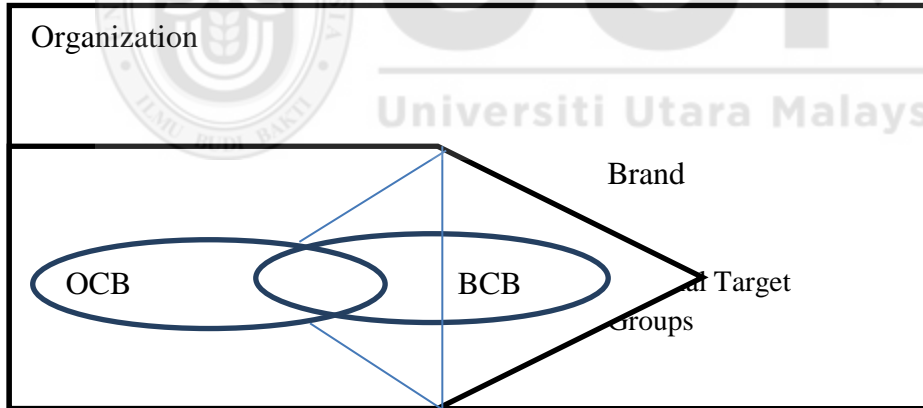


Figure2.1

*The relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and brand citizenship behavior (Burmann & Zeplin 2005).*

The above Fig, is based on the arguments of Burmann and Zeplin (2005) that OCB is said to be more intra-organization oriented. On the other hand BCB is seen as an extension of OCB which focuses more on the quality of brand-employee relationships (Shaari et al.,

2012). Therefore, BCB includes not only work-related behaviors but it includes brand-related behaviors in order to achieve organization and brand goals. Contrary view was argued with regard to the differences between the two constructs by King and Grace (2012). The researchers opined that the argument raised by Burmann and Zeplin (2005) is not sufficient to delineate OCB and BCB, hence it was considered as synonymous. In the present study, the researcher considers the two constructs as different as argued by Burmann and Zeplin (2005). Thus, employees are not only required to exhibit extra behavior on work-related issues but also while dealing with brand-related issues.

The studies of employee's behaviors have gained considerable attention among marketing researchers, practitioners and professionals. Several researchers have used different terms to address employees brand-consistent behavior such as behavioral brand, brand oriented behavior, brand-adequate behavior, brand-supportive behavior, brand-loyalty behavior, brand-building behavior,(Kaufmann, Vrontis, Czinkota, & Hadiono, 2012). Employee brand-consistent behavior has been argued to be either in-role or extra-role behavior (Shaari et al., 2012).

In-role behavior is considered as the extent to which the employee meet the brand standard approved by the organization based on their role as brand representative (Morhart et al., 2009). Extra-role is the extent to which the employee goes beyond the prescribed standard set up by the organization (Shaari et al., 2015). They further posited that extra-role behavior is more useful to the organization as it ensures organizational survival and serves as a differentiation tools. Therefore, organizations are not only

expected to focus their brand strategies to the understanding of external customer behavior and attitude but also the internal customer that is employees. This is because understanding employee's brand behavior and attitude is important as their behavior play a crucial role in managing and building strong brand (Burmam & Zeplin, 2005). Therefore, the present study focuses on extra-role behavior and in line of with the argument of Burmann and Zeplin (2005) and terms such behavior as brand citizenship behavior that employee exhibit in order to enhance brand identity. This is because employees BCB give more comprehensive meaning to extra-role behavior employee exhibit in the organization.

According to Burmann and Zeplin (2005) employee's BCB can be defined as an aggregate construct which describes a number of generic employee behaviors that enhance brand identity. In addition King and Grace (2012) use the term employee's BCB to explain extra-role behavior employees in an organization exhibit in order to achieve organization or brand goals. Hence, the researchers view brand citizenship behavior as the employee behaviors that are not prescribed by the organization yet consistent the brand values of the organization, thus producing positive organizational outcomes. The table below gives summary of the BCB definitions and its dimension as used by different researchers.

Table 2.1

*Employee BCB Definition and Its Dimensions*

No.	Author (s)/Year	Definition	Dimension (s)
1	Burmann & Zeplin, (2005)	As an aggregate construct this describes a number of generic employee behaviors that enhance brand identity.	7 (helping behavior, consideration, enthusiasm, sportsmanship, endorsement, self-development, advancement).
2	Morhart et al. (2009)	Employee action that go beyond the prescribed roles for the good of the corporate brand and are discretionary	2 (positive word of mouth, participation)
4	King & Grace (2012)	As the employee behaviors that are non-prescribed or above and beyond the norm yet consistent the brand values of the organization, thus engendering positive organizational outcomes.	Uni-dimensional construct
5	Shaari et al. (2012)	Employees' voluntary basis to project a number of generic employee behavior that enhance the brand identity	7 (helping behavior, consideration, enthusiasm, sportsmanship, endorsement, self-development, advancement).
6	Chiang et al. (2012)	In line with Burmann (2005)	3 (helping behavior/brand consideration, sportsmanship, & self-development
7	Chang et al. (2013)	In line with Burmann (2005)	3 (helping behavior, consideration/enhancement of the brand, sportsmanship/endorsement of the brand.
8	Nyadzayo, Matanda, & Ewing, (2015)	As internal staff discretionary activities or generic behaviors that contribute to the viability and vitality of the brand.	3 (brand endorsement, helping behavior, and brand enthusiasm

Burmann and Zeplin (2005) argued that employee's BCB has seven dimensions. The dimensions were built on the seven (7) dimensions of OCB which was proposed by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Paine, and Bachrach, (2000). According to the researchers, there are seven dimensions of OCB include helping behavior, loyalty, organizational compliance, sportsmanship, civic virtue and self-development. Nevertheless, Burmann and Zeplin (2005) argued that the first dimension is more internally focused that is helping colleagues, but for BCB it should include the external consumers. Furthermore the remaining six should be concentrated on the brand instead on the whole organization. Hence, the researchers renamed and come up with the following:

### **2.3.1 Helping Behavior**

This is the extent to which the employee have positive attitudes, friendliness, and helpfulness toward the external customer (Chang et al., 2012). Burmann and Zeplin (2005) posited that this dimension differs from organization citizenship behavior as it does not limit to only helping colleagues in a group but to be extended to customers. This may include employee confronting a co-worker for engaging in a behavior that is detrimental to the brand.

### **2.3.2 Brand consideration**

This refers to as the brand-centered behavior guidelines that employee has to follow before he or she communicates or take action on brand related situation (Burmann & Zeplin 2005). That is to say before taking any action and communicating anything about the brand, the employee must reflect on the impact such will have on the brand. For

example employee with brand consideration follows brand rules while serving customer or dealing with their complaints/grievances even in a situation that he or she is not monitored by supervisor.

### **2.3.3 Brand enthusiasm**

This refers to extra initiative behavior showed by employee while engaging in brand related behaviors. This may involve taking extra-building initiatives by either attending workshops and conferences (Nyadzayo et al., 2015). The employee for example voluntarily participates in brand related activities to foster brand value.

### **2.3.4 Sportsmanship**

This is viewed as the extent or degree to which employee engage for the brand without complaining even if such may cause inconvenience and also keen to engage on behalf of the brand even at high opportunity costs (Burmam & Zeplin, 2005). That is to say such employee tolerates inconveniences if engage for brand. For example such employee never complains about been inconvenient by brand related activities.

### **2.3.5 Brand endorsement**

This is viewed as to the extent to which employee recommend the brand to others either in a non-job related situations for example to friends or in a job-related situation to newcomers in the organization. According to King et al. (2012) brand endorsement is viewed as the degree to which an individual employee is keen to say a positive things about an organization's brand and show his/her willingness to recommend the brand to

others. Employees with this behavior for example may voluntarily promote the brand to customers or new employees.

### **2.3.6 Self-development**

This is the extent to which the individual employee is willing to continuously acquire more brand-related skills. This represents the behaviors that employees show to advance their brand-related understanding, skills and abilities (Chang et al., 2012). Employee with such behavior for example may engage in brand related training to learn more skills and knowledge about the brand.

### **2.3.7 Brand advancement**

The extent to which individual employees contribute to the enhancement of brand identity via customer feedbacks and innovative ideas (Chang et al., 2012). Employees provide suggestions that contribute to changing of new market needs in order to deliver the right experience to the target customers.

However, studies conducted have measured employee BCB as a multi-dimensional construct based on these seven dimensions as suggested by Burmann and Zeplin (2005) and some have measured it not based on the seven dimensions. In a particular study Burmann et al. (2009) measured BCB using the seven dimensions but the study concludes that employee consist of only three dimensions. They argued that BCB has three (3) dimensions namely readiness to help, brand enthusiasm, and lastly propensity for self-development. In the same way, Shaari et al.(2012) in their study investigated the



relationship between internal branding practices such as brand reward and brand knowledge, and use the seven dimensions to measure employee BCB. In the study, it was concluded that employee BCB has four dimensions also an overlap between self-development and self- advancement. These four dimensions include helping behavior, sportsmanship, self-development, and brand endorsement.

However, some studies have measured employee BCB as a one-dimension construct. In a particular study King and Grace (2012) measured employee BCB using seven items as a one-dimension construct. In the study, measurement items were developed by the researcher from the original work of Podsakoff et al. (2000). The competing arguments by Burmann and Zeplin (2005) and King and Grace (2012) are considered to have merit, however, the balance of evidence clearly supports a multi-dimensional as against uni-dimensional view of BCB (Porricelli, Yurova, Abratt, & Bendixen, 2014). Therefore, in this study, employee brand citizenship behavior was measured as a multi-dimension construct. In addition, measuring BCB as a multi-dimensional construct give more comprehensive view on the extra role behaviors employees exhibited. Furthermore, the study adapt the dimensionality of the construct based on the fact that other studies were conducted in Western countries and Asia, therefore studies on brand citizenship behavior is lacking particularly in Nigeria.

Equally, employee BCB was measured as a multi-dimensional construct based on the suggestion by other studies (Shaari et al., 2012; Burmann et al., 2009) in other to further validate the reliability and validity of the measurement items in another context using

different data set. Specifically, the study adapted four dimensions of Shaari et al (2012) as the measure of employee BCB was argued to depend on context and the nature of the study, therefore there is no universal measures for the construct (Porricelli et al., 2014; Du Preez, Bendixen, & Abratt, 2017). Consequently, studies on employee BCB have measured it as a multi-dimensional construct not based on the original seven dimensions (see Chiang et al. 2013; Chang et al., 2012; Porricelli et al. 2014; Du Preez et al., 2017).

Internal branding literature has recognized the importance of employees in brand management, as they play a crucial role in making brand related decisions (King & Grace, 2012). This is because of the fact that functional and emotional values of brand are delivered by employees during their interaction with customers. Therefore, it is argued that the achievement of brand particularly service brands depends largely on the employees as their attitude and behavior during service delivery affect customer satisfaction (Papasolomou & Vrontis, 2006). Delivering brand promise has been a major challenge to service brands, as service is characterized as been intangible and non-standardized (Uen, Wu, Teng, & Liu, 2012). They further assert that internalizing brand strategies is seen as a mechanism that may raise employee's awareness and encourage brand-supporting behavior. Hence, employee's BCB is critical to the achievement/success of organization.

Burmann and Zeplin (2005) posited that employee with high commitment are likely to exhibit brand citizenship behavior. Hence, this behavior makes employee to act not only as sellers however show sympathy to customers. In line with service-profit chain

suggested by Heskett, Jones, Loveman, Sasser, and Schlesinger, (1994) which assumed that organization profit and growth are stimulated by customer loyalty, and such loyalty depends on the services provided to the customer. They further posited that employee is responsible for delivering service to customers and for the service to be delivered the employee has to be satisfied and loyal to the organization. Furthermore it was argued that employee satisfaction and loyalty depends on high quality support services and policies from the organization which enable the employee to deliver quality service to the customer (Burmam & Zeplin 2005). Therefore, employee brand citizenship behavior has an impact on organization's brand success.

Studies conducted have shown that employee BCB has an impact on organization's brand success (Yang et al., 2015). This is because frontline employees have direct contact with customers; hence their attitude and behavior have an influence on customer perception of the brand. Additionally, Henkel et al.(2007) opined that employees are crucial for customer perception of brand image. In their study it was discovered that brand-consistent behavior is critical to brand success. In a particular study, Burmann et al. (2009) opined that employee brand behavior has an impact on brand strength which is measured based on the quality of the brand customer relationships. Similarly, Löhdorf and Diamantopoulos (2014) argued that employees are crucial in building strong brand, particularly if they engage in brand development behavior and positive word of mouth. Furthermore, employees while representing the organization to customers, they provide organization with information on customer's desires and brand perception (Löhdorf & Diamantopoulos, 2014). Hence, employees that exhibit brand citizenship behavior can

offer high quality input for organization by providing information and suggesting ways to improve on delivery of brand promise.

In addition, Jung and Yoon, (2013) in their study on the relationship between customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction, posited that an employee that is satisfied with the job and work environment is likely to deliver the brand promise effectively to the customer. Based on the assumption that employee attitude has an impact on his/her behavior, then the more satisfied an employee is the more likely he/she exhibits brand citizenship behavior. As such, the more likely the employee will deliver the brand effectively to the customer. And based on the argument put forward by Keller (1993) that the power of the brand depends on the favorable response of the consumer, therefore brand citizenship behavior may have an impact on brand equity. In another study Yang et al. (2015) opined that through their positive brand behavior employees in an organization bring brand experience to customers, which in turn affect customer's perception of the brand. Therefore, customer's positive attitude and perception on brand has impact on the brand equity (Keller 2001). In addition Nyadzayo et al. (2015) in their study brand citizenship behavior is found to have positive impact on brand image.

In a particular study, Biedenbach, Bengtsson, & Wincent, (2011) conducted on 632 customers of a big auditing company, examine the customer's perception on employees behavior in relations to customer – employee's rapport. The study viewed customer – employee rapport as customer's perception of employee's behavior that has an impact on customer satisfaction and customer brand loyalty. The finding of the study revealed a

significant positive relationship between customers – employee's rapport with 3 dimensions of brand equity. The study, argued that the attitudes and behaviors of contact employees are crucial to service provider as it affects the perception of the customers. In another study Baumgarth and Schmidt (2010) opined that employee brand-consistent behavior which include retention behavior, intra-role and extra role behavior may have an impact on the external brand equity. The researchers further argued that studies of service delivery and brand behavior show that employee that exhibit BCB has great impact on the overall performance of an organization.

Review of literatures has shown that researchers have used different factors or variables as a determinants of employee's brand citizenship behavior (Shaari et al., 2012). The researchers further grouped these factors into three groups namely individual's factors, interpersonal factors and organizational factors. Individual factors are considered to be the personal characteristics of individual that affect employee's BCB such as employee brand knowledge, brand identification, commitment and loyalty. Interpersonal factors include such factors within the employee's sphere of activity or life space that influence their willingness to exhibit BCB. Such factors include brand community, brand leadership practices, cross-functional roles and co-worker, and trust and empowerment. On the other hand organizational factors include such factors such as brand communication, brand training, brand reward, recruitment practices, organizational factors, marketing and brand orientation and empowerment and involvement. All these factors are considered to encourage employees to exhibit BCB in order to achieve brand

goals (Shaari et al., 2012). Table 2.2 below give summary of some prominent studies and the predictors used on employee BCB.



Table 2.2

*Prominent studies on Predictors of Employee Brand Behavior*

No.	Researcher (s)/Year	Brand reward	Brand training	Leadership Style	Brand communication	Structure	Identification	Commitment	Brand Pride	Brand Knowledge	Brand Fit	Belief in Brand	Culture	Brand Loyalty	Empowerment	Workers/ Co-workers	Marketing practices /orientation	Control	Service standard	Recruitment	Brand Support
1	Helm et al., (2016) <sup>a</sup>						✓		✓		✓										
2	Shaari et al., (2015) <sup>a</sup>			✓																	
3	Yang et al., (2015) <sup>a</sup>		✓		✓																
4	Löhdorf & Diamantopoulos, (2014) <sup>a</sup>									✓	✓	✓									
5	Chiang et al., (2013) <sup>a</sup>		✓	✓	✓								✓								
6	Asha & Jyothi, (2013) <sup>a</sup>		✓		✓																
7	King & So (2013) <sup>a</sup>		✓							✓										✓	✓
8	Shaari et al., (2012) <sup>a</sup>	✓								✓											
9	Chang et al., (2012) <sup>a</sup>																				
10	Thorbjornsen & Supphellen, (2011) <sup>a</sup>			✓		✓															

Table 2.2 (Continued)

No.	Researcher (s)/Year	Brand reward	Brand training	Leadership Style	Brand communication	Structure	Identification	Commitment	Brand Pride	Brand Knowledge	Brand Fit	Belief in Brand	Culture	Brand Loyalty	Empowerment	Workers / Co-workers	Marketing practices	Control	Service standard	Recruitment	Brand Support
11	Javanmard & Nia, (2011) <sup>a</sup>					✓	✓							✓							
12	Punjaisri & Wilson, (2011) <sup>a</sup>		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓							✓						
13	King & Grace, (2010) <sup>a</sup>				✓			✓		✓											
14	Burmann et al., (2009) <sup>a</sup>		✓	✓	✓	✓															
15	Morhart et al., (2009) <sup>a</sup>														✓	✓					
16	King & Grace (2008) <sup>b</sup>		✓		✓					✓						✓					
17	Henkel et al., (2007) <sup>a</sup>														✓		✓	✓			
18	Punjaisri & Wilson, (2007) <sup>a</sup>		✓		✓		✓	✓											✓		
19	Papasolomou & Vrontis, (2006) <sup>b</sup>	✓	✓																		
20	Vallaster & de Chernatony, (2006) <sup>b</sup>		✓	✓	✓																
21	Miles & Mangold, (2005) <sup>b</sup>				✓	✓				✓							✓				

Key: (a) quantitative study (b) qualitative study



## **2.4 Internal Branding**

Internal branding is viewed as strategic processes of aligning and empowering employees to deliver brand promise made to customers in consistent manner (MacLavery et al., 2007). They further argued through such activities such as brand communication, brand training, brand reward, brand leadership, recruitment and other sustainable factors organization can achieve such objective. Specifically, the present study did not focus on brand recruitment because it was argued to be more relevant for discussion of employer branding and more appropriate to attract new employees and not to retain existing ones (Shaari et al., 2012). Internal branding literatures have established that internal branding started after employees were recruited by the organization as cited by Shaari et al. (2012), hence the study considers those practices that organizations uses to align and empower their employees after they are employed (brand leadership, brand reward, brand training and brand communication).

Internal branding is aimed at ensuring that employees are attitudinally and behaviorally ready to represent and deliver brand promise made to customers (Punjaisr et al., 2008). Branding literatures argued that internal branding practices which are aimed at aligning employees' behavior to brand values originated from human resource practices (Shaari et al., 2012). According to Punjaisri et al. (2009) internal branding were traditionally the responsibility of marketing people in terms of internal communication. However, the sole reliance on internal communication was criticized as a pitfall of internal branding. Therefore, the need to aligned human resource practices such as performance appraisal, recruitment practices and training with the brand values so as to avoid sending conflicting

messages to external customers and internal customers (employees) (Aurand et al., 2005). Hence, researchers such as MacLavery et al. (2007) broaden the integrative framework across both marketing and human resources management and include other such as reward, training practices, brand leadership, and communication.

Organization through internal branding motivates and stimulates employees by providing them with brand understanding and the right skills in order to emulate in their brand behavior (Matanda & Ndubisi, 2013). According to Punjaisri and Wilson (2011) through internal branding, organization ensure that employees delivered the brand promise to meet customer's expectations in order to achieve competitive advantage. Employees therefore need to be comfortable with their role and responsibility for them to live the brand effectively.

Internal branding has received considerable attention from marketing practitioners and researchers in the management of strong brand. Initially, organizations focused their branding activities to external stakeholders such as customers. As such, brand communication is passed to customers through marketing efforts such as advertisement (Aurand et al., 2005). The brand message is important as it tells the consumers what they should expect and also enable the organization to position the brand as distinct competition (Judson, Gorchels, & Aurand, 2006). But as competition increases particularly among service brand and the need to build strong brand, organizations shifted from product branding to corporate branding. Moreover, Foster et al. (2010) argued that organizations have realized the significance of employees in corporate brand

management, therefore the concept of internal branding and employer branding were recently introduced. Thus, internal branding is seen as a means to create powerful corporate brand (Vallaster, 2004)

Internal branding focused mainly on the implementation of branding strategies within the organization in order to ensure that employees understand their roles and responsibilities to enable them deliver the promise made to customers (Foster et al., 2010). In contrast employer brand focused on ensuring that the organization recruits the right employees that will deliver the brand to the customers in the first instance. Review of literatures has shown that internal branding and employee branding are used synonymous (Aurand et al., 2005). Consequently, for the purpose of the current study, internal branding will be used to refer to branding on individual employees.

Internal branding literatures have shown that the term internal marketing is used alongside internal branding (Patla & Pandit, 2012). According to Punjaisri, Wilson, and Evanschitzky, (2008) branding to employees was previously considered to be the responsibility of marketing. Therefore, organization through internal communication secures employee's commitment and encourages behavioral change in order to support the brand. But recently, reliance on internal communication was regarded as a drawback in internal branding, therefore broader integrative framework across marketing, human resource, and management is required (Punjaisri et al., 2008). As such, internal branding is considered to be more holistic than internal marketing.

Moreover, researchers such as MacLavery et al., (2007) further broadened the integrative framework across both marketing and human resources management and include such practices as brand leadership, brand reward, brand training, brand communication, and brand recruitment. In the present study therefore, organization through internal branding practices such as brand leadership, brand reward, brand training, and brand communication can align the behaviors and attitude of employees in order to encourage them to exhibit positive brand consistent behavior. Hence, the focus here is on extra-role behavior (BCB) as such the above mentioned practices are said to be the practices or factors that determine employee BCB through the mechanism of employee brand fit.

## **2.5 Brand leadership**

Leadership is viewed as an art to initiate and encourage followers so that they can strive hard toward accomplishment of specific objective (Siddique, Aslam, Khan, & Fatima, 2011). They further posited that leaders in an organization use different styles or methods in order to influence their followers toward achieving specific objectives. Leadership can also be viewed as the ability to inspire and to direct others efforts to achieve success (House 2004) (in Siddique et al., 2011). Similarly, leadership is defined as the process in which the leader inspires the followers, their behaviors and attitudes in order to achieve an objective and guides the organization in a manner that makes it successful (Al-Sharafi & Rajiani, 2013).

Branding literatures have established the role of employees particularly in the service organization in transforming brand value into brand reality (Vallaster & de Chernatony,

2005). Through internal branding organizations align the behaviors of their employees with the brand values. However, leadership has been acknowledged as a mechanism through which internal branding can be achieved, this is because of the fact that the leader provides direction for the organization (Zaccaro, Rittman, & Marks, 2001). Furthermore, it is established that brand leadership is critical toward brand building (Wallace, de Chernatony, & Buil, 2013b). Leaders who “live the brand” are found to be willing to support employee understanding and acceptance of the brand, and also enhance their brand supporting behavior. Having a leader is necessary in organization, this is because the leader is seen as someone who leads, directs and influences the employees toward achieving organizational objectives (Siddique et al., 2011). In an organization, the leaders have a critical role to play to encourage and support the individual employees to explore new ideas and improve work procedures that is beneficial to the organization. Hence, the task of getting employees to perform as brand representative to build and strengthen the brand image is the responsibility of the leader (Morhart et al., 2009).

The leaders serves as a role model to other employees in an organization (Vallaster & Chernatony, 2006). Therefore, the behavior of leaders is crucial to the relationship between them and the employees. As such the leaders need to align their attitude and behavior to the value of the organization. This is because of the fact that the leader is responsible for translating the brand promise into action to the employees and that this is done through both verbal and non-verbal communication. Similarly, Vallaster and de Chernatony(2006) further emphasized the significance of leader as a facilitator, therefore the need to align his/her behavior with the brand value. The leaders initiate and enable a

behavioral modification that is in line with the brand value. The researchers suggested that committed leaders see themselves as part of the internal branding process. Sujchaphong, Nguyen, & Melewar(2015) argued that leaders ensure that the employees deliver quality services consistently to meet customer's needs. Hence, brand leadership plays a vital role in shaping the behavior and attitude of employee in an organization.

Specifically, the concept of brand leadership was first coined by Morhart et al.(2009) in their study of brand-specific leadership. In the study brand leadership is viewed as the approaches/styles that the leader used to motivate employees to engage in both in-role and extra role behavior. Hence, the researchers argued that there are two approaches or styles which include transactional leadership (TRL) and transformational leadership (TFL).

### **2.5.1 Transformational brand leadership style**

This is seen as a new approach or style that leaders used in an organization in order to influence the behaviors of their followers (Jandaghi, Bahamin, & Abaei, 2015). Avolio and Bass, (1995) posited that TFL can be viewed as the form of negative and positive response, aimed at developing the individual who is expected to complete a task while learning from success and failure or mistakes. The researchers further asserted that TRL depends on contingent reward which depends on its influence on the follower's motives. TFL on the other hand concentrates on changing the motive of the followers encouraging them to reflect more than their personal interest but also the moral ethical consequences

of their actions and goals. That is to say the leader delegates authority to his or her followers to perform their role and responsibility.

According to Morhart et al. (2009) TFL can be defined as a leader's method to inspiring their employees to perform as brand representatives by appealing to their values and personal convictions. The researchers further argued that leaders that used this approach are characterized with such behaviors by performing as a role model and authentically "living the brand values", articulating a convincing and differentiating brand vision and increasing personal participation and pride in the corporate brand. Behave in such a way that inspires employees to represent brand value in their work, including service recovery. Coach and instill individuals to grow into roles as brand representatives. Hence, leaders who used this approach/tactic to motivate their followers are said to be charismatic, inspirational, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Internal branding literatures have established that TFL approach motivate employees to engage in an extra role behavior (BCB) (Shaari et al., 2015).

According to Men and Stacks(2013) transformational leaders are charismatics. They further assert that this form of leadership creates an emotional attachment between individual employees and the leaders. It creates trust between the leader and employee and increases their confidence and their willingness to participate in decision making.

### **2.5.2 Transactional brand leadership style**

TRL is seen as a tactic/method to motivate individuals to perform on behalf of the corporate brand through contingency rewards (Morhart et al. 2009). The researchers further argued that leaders that used this approach possess such characteristics as specifying behavioral standard for all conditions and stipulating rewards once a particular role is met by brand representatives. Giving clarification as to effective and unsuccessful performance, and punishing employees for not aligned with brand standards set by the core brand values. Therefore, such leaders used contingent reward to encourage positive attitude and behavior. This involves clarifying roles and responsibilities expected to be performed and providing contingent reward for fulfillment of obligations (Men & Stacks, 2013).

Furthermore, Avolio and Bass (1995) in their study argued that TRL is perceived where a follower gets a reward from the leader where he or she successfully enacts a role as agreed by the leader. And the follower can be punished where he or she is corrected, or disciplined by the leader for not meeting a particular standard of performance as defined by the leader. In addition Men and Stacks(2013) assert that transactional leadership style is an exchange process. Employees are reinforcing based on their performance. Leaders who use this style consider organizational structure, policy power and authority to control their followers. Hence, the leader correct, evaluates, and trains the followers to meet the standard set for them. Therefore, consistent with leadership-member exchange theory (LMX), which assumed that leaders in an organization do not use the same style on their followers, it was argued that they use different type of exchange relationships among



their followers (Tziner, Kaufmann, Vasiliu, & Tordera, 2011). The exchange relationship is argued to range between high-quality and low-quality exchange. Based on the definitions given, the present study defines brand leadership in line with the definition of Morhart et al. (2009) as the approach or style a leader used to motivate his or her followers to engage in brand-consistent behavior (BCB) in order to achieve organization's brand goal.

Several studies have shown that brand leadership has an impact on employee's brand-consistent behavior (Siddique et al., 2011; Al-Sharafi & Rajiani, 2013; Vallaster and de Chernatony 2005; 2006; Wallace, de Chernatony, et al., 2013; Wallace, de Chernatony, et al., 2013b; Kaufmann, Vrontis, Czinkota, and Hadiono, 2012). Similarly, Uen, Wu, Teng, and Liu (2012) in their study of TFL and employee branding behavior in Taiwan hotels, the findings revealed that transformational leadership has positive relationship with employee brand building behavior. Nevertheless, the study revealed the influence of only one style of brand leadership, hence transactional leadership was not covered in the study. In the same vein, Burmann et al., (2009) indicated that brand leadership positively influence employee BCB through the mechanism of brand commitment. However, the study failed to give direct empirical support to the impact of brand leadership on employee BCB. The study is also important to the present study as it confirmed support for indirect significant relationship of brand leadership on employee BCB.

In a particular study, Morhart et al. (2009) investigated the mechanism through which TRL and TFL influence employee's brand building behavior. The study was conducted

on 269 customer-contact employees (frontline employees), the researchers concluded that brand oriented organizations must move toward more TFL style and a reasonable TRL qualities. Hence, TFL is establish to have more effect on employees brand building behavior particularly extra-role behavior. The study was conducted only on the front line employees, therefore other back stage employees were ignored in the study. Furthermore, the study concentrated only on the influence of brand leadership on BCB and failed to consider other practices such as brand reward, brand communication, and training.

Study conducted by Punjaisri et al. (2013) aimed at determining the impact of brand-specific leadership style on brand-aligned service recovery of customer-contact employees. The results from 246 respondents revealed that transactional leadership is ineffective in fostering brand-building behavior while on the other hand transformational approach is found to be significant on brand-building behavior. However, the study only focuses on the in-role behavior; therefore extra-role behavior (BCB) was not considered in the study. Equally, Kaufmann et al., (2012), their qualitative findings revealed that brand-oriented leadership particularly TFL exact significant influence on employee brand-building behavior. It was concluded that brand leadership is the starting point of employee's brand-building behavior. Nonetheless, the study did not provide empirical support on the influence of brand leadership on extra role behavior (BCB).

Equally, Porricelli et al., (2014) conducted a study on the influence of internal brand management on employee BCB through the mediating role of employee brand commitment and employee job satisfaction. However, the study failed to provide direct

empirical result on the influence of brand leadership on employee BCB. And in addition, the study did not consider the different styles of brand leadership leaders employed to encourage positive brand behavior such as BCB. Additionally, Shaari et al.(2015) while studying the influence of brand leadership styles on employee's BCB of 286 employees in Malaysia hotels, the results revealed significant connection between transformational brand leadership and employee's BCB. Also positive connection was found between transactional brand leadership and BCB, but the researchers posited that transformational is more dominant in enhancing employee's BCB. Specifically, the study is important to the present study as the researchers consider only one practice on enhancing BCB. And in addition, further research was suggested to consider other determinants of employee BCB. Therefore, the present study is aimed at bridging the identified gaps in literature by incorporating other practices such as reward, communication and training.

## **2.6 Brand Reward**

In an organization, service employees provide service to customers and in order to do so they must be satisfied, motivated and be able to do their job without any obstacles (Ellinger et al., 2013). Organization has realized the need to establish stability between individual employee's involvement to the organization and the return made to the employees by the organization. To achieve this balance the organization uses reward system on its employees (Pratheepkanth, 2011). The researcher further posited that reward system used by organization serve as a tool that organization used to motivate employees to behave in a desired ways. And also it serves as a means of encouraging good management-employee relationship, increase commitment and positive behavior.

According to Ong and Teh, (2012) argued that the reward system used by organizations have a great impact on their employee's attitude and behavior. This is because of the fact that such reward has a direct impact on the employee's satisfaction and also helps them to achieve their personal goals. As such, in an attempt to get rewarded, it is assume that the employee will change his or her behavior so as to achieve a desired level of performance.

From internal branding point of view, the concept of brand reward has received less attention by researchers particularly on its contribution to building strong brand with high equity (Shaari et al., 2012). But it is established that reward and recognition schemes used by organization could have a direct impact on the connection between the organization and the employees (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2011). Furthermore, the researchers posited that the impact of internal branding on employees attitude and behavior can be heightened if the employees are satisfied with their working place. As such reward system and remuneration schemes are found to be important determinant of employee satisfaction. Thus, the reward system is seen as a tool that encourages positive employee brand-consistent behavior; hence affect employee BCB.

According to Papasolomou and Vrontis, (2006) reward can be seen to include both monetary and non-monetary incentive organization gives to employees in order to achieve organizational goals. Monetary reward includes the incentive an organization gives to the employee in form of money for excellent job performance. On the other hand non-monetary reward includes incentives in form of opportunities like training, promotions, and recognitions aimed at sustaining employee motivation. Pratheepkanth,

(2011) argued that reward can be viewed as both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation that organization uses to encourage employee to perform in a desired ways.

Similarly, Ong and The (2012) defined reward as anything that is extrinsically or intrinsically reinforced, maintained, and improved employee's behavior in an organization. Furthermore they assert that reward is the return that employees get from an organization for an exchange of service the employees rendered to the organization. From this definition it is clear that reward include both monetary and non-monetary compensation organization gives to motivate employee to perform as required. Furthermore Njanja, Maina, Kibet, and Njagi, (2013) posited that reward is the incentive that organization gives to employees in order to encourage positive behavior. In addition, Tahira, Shah, Hussain, and Zaman, (2012) defined reward as the benefits workers received from their workplace and is considered as the determinants of job commitment and satisfaction.

According to Shaari et al., (2012) brand reward can be viewed as the extent or degree to which employee is being rewarded and recognized by organization for engaging in brand-consistency behaviors. From the definition brand reward includes both monetary and non-monetary reward used by organization to motivate positive brand behavior. Therefore the monetary reward includes the financial reward that an employee receives for engaging brand citizenship behavior. On the other hand non-monetary reward includes incentive such as promotion, and recognition to employee for engaging brand citizenship behavior. Based on these definitions offered the present study define brand

reward as the extent to which employee in an organization is rewarded and recognized for engaging in brand- consistent behavior(BCB).

Past studies have stressed the importance of reward system used by organization on employees to influence their behaviors and attitude. In a particular study Burmann et al., (2009) posited that for strong brand commitment and brand citizenship to be established, incentives structure is required by organization. Thus, it is clear that brand reward may have an impact on the behavior of an employee. Therefore, in order to encourage employee to exhibit BCB fair reward is required to be provided by the organization. However, the study failed to provide empirical support to the arguments. Therefore, considering the gap in literatures the current study is intended at providing the empirical connection between brand reward and employee BCB.

Additionally, studies such as (Foster, Punjaisri, and Cheng, 2010; Punjaisri et al., 2013; Lee, Kim, and Kim, 2013) have stressed the impact of brand reward on employee's commitment, loyal and identification with the brand, hence affecting their BCB. Punjaisri & Wilson, (2011) argued that factors such as reward were found to enhance employee brand attitude and behavior. The study emphasized the need to take into consideration the perception of employees have on reward/recognition as it could reduce the effectiveness of internal branding. Nevertheless, the study failed to provide empirical evidence to support the argument. In particular, the study focused on in-role behavior of employee therefore extra role behavior was not considered in the study. Additionally, Burmann and Zeplin (2005) argued that reward does not induce employees to exhibit extra role

behavior. This argument has made the impact of brand reward on employee BCB inconclusive, hence there is the need to further undertake a research to find out more on the impact of such practices on employee BCB.

In addition, Shaari et al., (2012) undertake a research on the connection between internal branding practices and brand citizenship behavior, the study was aimed at examining the impact of brand reward and brand knowledge on employee's brand citizenship behavior. The results of 288 employees from 12 hotels in northern region of Malaysia revealed significant positive connection between brand reward and employee's BCB. The study concluded that non-monetary reward particularly empowerment was found to encourage employees to engage in brand citizenship behavior. The study is specifically important to the present study as the results confirmed the support for indirect significant effect of brand reward on employee BCB. Moreover, the study did not consider other internal branding practices such as brand training and brand communication; therefore there is still gap in literature which the present study aimed at fulfilling. Furthermore, the study was conducted in an Asian country; as such further researches were suggested by the researchers to be conducted in different context.

Similarly, Nyadzayo et al., (2015) in their study argued that organization through such practices such as brand reward can encourage employees to be more committed and to exhibit brand citizenship behavior. It was argued that organizations can use brand-centered human resource efforts such as brand reward to promote employee brand commitment and employee BCB among customer-contact employees. Nevertheless, the

study failed to provide empirical support to support the said argument or claim. Therefore, the present study aimed to fill the identified gap in literature by providing empirical support on the influence of brand reward on employee BCB. In addition Asha and Jyothi, (2013) argued that commitment in an organization depends on compensation the employee receive. That is to say where the employees perceive the rewards is fair compared with their work efforts, such employee is likely to be satisfied and hence committed to the organization. The researchers further assert that committed employees are likely to exhibit BCB. As such, there is a relationship between brand reward and brand citizenship behavior.

## **2.7 Brand Training**

Brand management requires organizations to have effective internal brand management practices. As successful translation of brand values into operational decision making is seen as a prerequisite of organizational success (King & So 2013). This requires organization to focus on employees who are the most important assets for building and communicating brand core values. Branding literatures have stressed the importance of internal branding practices such as brand training in shaping the behaviors and attitude of employees in order to achieve brand goals (Chang, et al. 2012). They further argued that internal branding practice can be viewed as such practices that organizations uses to make their employees produce positive brand behavior and attitude toward the organization's brand. Hence, brand training is seen as an important internal practice that organization can use to stimulate positive brand behavior.



Mangold and Miles (2007) argued that employee knowledge and understanding of brand image is of importance to the success of a brand. And such can be achieved through training and development. The researchers further argued that employees can be taught on how to handle difficult customers or work complicated situation, consistent with organization and brand value. King and So (2013) opined that employees may have prior knowledge of the brand but may not be able to understand what the brand value is and to reflect such value in brand-building behavior. Therefore, such employee require brand training to deliver brand promise. As such how to deliver brand promise is more important than what to deliver, thus the need for employees to acquire the right skills and knowledge to provide the promise to meet customer's expectations (King & Grace 2010).

Although review of literatures has shown that brand training is aimed at providing employees with specific in-role behavior (Shaari et al., 2012). In the present study, brand training is considered to enhances not only in-role behavior but also extra-role behavior (BCB). As brand training is argued to encourage employee's brand identification, loyalty, and commitment, therefore enhance employee BCB (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007; Punjaisri, et al., 2009; Papasolomou & Vrontis, 2006). In this regard, brand commitment is considered to be a key driver of exhibiting extra role behavior BCB (Burmam & Zeplin, 2005). Furthermore, through brand training employees are provided with brand knowledge, and research has shown that brand knowledge has great impact on employee BCB (Shaari et al., 2012).

Buckley and Caple (2007) defined training as a planned and systematic effort by organization to develop employees with knowledge and skills in order to achieve organizations goals. The authors further opined that training benefits both the employees and the organization. To individual employees training increases affect both intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction for better performance of job as expected. On the side of the organization, it was argued that training improves the productivity of the organization through trained employees. King and So (2013) viewed brand training as the extent to which the organization provides employees with understanding on how their roles contribute to the brand promise delivery. That is providing the employees with understanding of brand values in such a way that make them meaningful and relevant to all employees' roles and responsibilities.

Brand training is also viewed as the process of equipping employees with brand related understanding and skills needed to enhance employees brand performance (Punjaisri et al. 2009). In addition, Aurand et al., (2005) defined brand training as a process organizations follow to provide or equip employees with brand understanding and to develop their attitude and behavior so as to achieve brand goals. In line with the above definitions by researchers, the present study define brand training as the systematic and planned effort by organization to develop and provide employee with brand related understanding (knowledge) and skills needed to enhance his or her brand-consistent behavior (BCB).

Studies have stressed the impact of brand training on brand-consistence behavior of employees (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007; Papasolomou & Vrontis, 2006; Vallaster and de Chernatony, 2006; Vallaster and de Chernatony, 2005; Mangold & Miles, 2007; Aurand et al., 2005; Sharma and Kamalanabhan, 2012; Thorbjornsen and Supphellen, 2011). In addition, Foster et al., (2010) posited that brand training is a crucial internal branding activities that enhances organizational effectiveness as it encourages the employees to remain with the organization, hence leading to positive employees behavior and attitude toward the brand.

In particular, King and So, (2013) in their study revealed that brand training has significant impact on employee brand understanding (brand knowledge), hence affecting their brand-consistent behavior. Nevertheless, the study revealed insignificant connection between brand training and brand-building behavior which make the finding inconclusive; hence further research is required in another context. In addition Punjaisri, et al., (2009) opined that brand training has a great influence on brand identification, brand satisfaction and brand commitment of employees. Based on the argument put forward by Burmann and Zeplin, (2005) brand commitment is a key driver of employee BCB, the present study argued that brand training has impact on employee BCB. Moreover, brand training was revealed to have significant influence on employee brand-building behavior. Nevertheless, the study focuses on the impact of brand training on in-role behavior as such extra role behavior (BCB) was not considered.

In another study conducted on employees of Hotel in Thailand, the study revealed that brand training is an important mechanism through which employees brand commitment, brand loyalty and brand identification can be achieved (Punjaisr et al., 2008). Therefore, brand training affects brand-supporting behavior of employees. The study focused the extent to which employee follows prescribed behavior set up by the organization (in role behavior). Therefore, employee BCB was not directly measured in the study. In addition the study considers two practices (brand communication and brand training) as internal branding practices through employee brand behavior can be enhanced.

Moreover, Chiang et al, (2013) in their study brand training was viewed as an important corporate brand practice that affects employees BCB. In another study, Chang et al., (2012) revealed that brand training has an impact on employees exhibiting brand citizenship behavior. This study is particularly important as it reveals the indirect impact of brand training on employee BCB, The studies focuses mainly on human resource practices which are aimed mainly on new employees. Similarly, Lee et al., (2013) in their study of the influence of internal branding on employees brand engagement argued that brand training has an impact on employee engagement. They further assert that brand training is an important internal branding practice that affects employee's brand behavior and attitude. However, the study did not provide the influence brand training on employee BCB. As such, the study failed to provide empirical support on the influence of brand training on employee brand behaviors. Therefore, based on this argument brand training may have an impact on employee brand citizenship behavior. Furthermore King and Grace, (2012) in their study opine that brand training is a key mechanism through

which internal branding process can be achieved. The researchers argued that through brand training employees are prepared to accomplish the explicit and implicit promises that are essential in a brand. Hence, increasing their commitment and affecting their willingness to exhibit BCB to achieve brand goals. Nevertheless, empirical support was not provided to the argument raised, hence this study intended at filling the identified gap in literature.

## **2.8 Brand Communication**

The concept of brand communication has received attention as an important internal branding practice among practitioners and marketing researchers that play an important role in creating employee brand-supporting behavior. Traditionally, marketing programs were concentrated on the customers, but as competition increases particularly among service brands, organizations turn to their employees in order to achieve competitive advantage (Thomson, de Chernatony, Arganbright, & Khan, 1999). Therefore, employees are considered to be the deliverers of service promise at each service encounter as such their behaviors and attitudes are crucial for organization (Punjaisri et al., 2009).

In addition, MacLavery et al., (2007) argued that although brand strategies are formulated by top management, but the brand promise is delivered by the frontline employees who have direct contact with the customers. The researchers further opined that for effective delivery of brand promise, organizations must use best internal brand practices in order to align the behaviors and attitude of the employees with the brand value.

As competition increases particularly in the service sector, building strong brand has become a key driver of achieving competitive advantage (Lee, Kim, & Kim, 2013). Brand differentiation has become necessary in the service industry because of the fact that service is intangible and customers are faced with alternatives to select from. Organizations have realized the importance of differentiation by internalizing their branding strategies on employees, as competitors find it difficult to replicate this strategy (Devasagayam, Buff, Aurand, & Judson, 2010). As such, organizations are now focusing their branding strategies to employees so that they inform them just as they inform their external customers (Shaari et al., 2013). Mitchell (2002) argued that organizations should tell their employees what make them great just as they inform their customers. Therefore to achieve competitive advantage, organizations must have an effective internal brand communication aimed at equipping employees with brand knowledge.

Brand communication is an important internal branding practice as it affects the brand-consistent behavior of employees particularly brand citizenship (Burmman et al., 2009). Brand communication provide the employees with brand understanding therefore increase their willingness to involve in achieving organization's brand goals (Mishra, Mishra, & Walker, n.d.). Consistent delivery of brand information to employees increases their engagement, loyalty satisfaction and commitment to the brand and therefore affect their perception of the brand (Thomson et al., 1999). The information that employees received from the organization is meant to guide their brand-consistent behavior so that they deliver what the brand promise to customer. Henkel et al., (2007) assert that in order to encourage brand-consistent behavior so that employee lives up to brand, the

information that is sent to customers must also be available to employees. Branding literature has established the importance of having a well-informed employees, as having knowledge of what the brand stands for will have direct impact on employees attitude and behaviors, hence affecting employee's BCB (Aurand et al., 2005; King & So, 2013).

Besides, Burmann and Zeplin, (2005) argued that brand communication is a means or method of generating brand awareness and understanding to employees in an organization. They further opined that there are three forms of brand communication. i. Central communication which provide information about the brand through magazines, journals, newsletters and that this information is been provided by central department. ii. Cascade communication in this form of brand communication, information about brand follow through organizational hierarchy from top to down. Although, the researchers argued that this method is time wasting, but employees are made to be convinced that the information is relevant and reliable because it is from a direct superior. iii. Lateral communication which is seen as an informal transmission of information among employees in an organization regardless of what position they are in the hierarchy. Baker, Rapp, Meyer, and Mullins, (2014) define brand communication as the dissemination of meaningful and related brand information to organizational employees so as to provide higher level customer satisfaction. The researchers opined that the most common method to pass information about brand is through direct means between manager and employees.

Similarly, Lee et al., (2013) view brand communication as a means of communicating to employees brand meaning so as to embrace the brand and behave in a way that is consistent with the brand promise. Thomson et al., (1999) consider brand communication as a process organizations follow to communicate to employees detail about brands and their strategies in order to increase their commitment to act as brand ambassadors. Based on the above definitions by researchers, this study defined brand communication as a process organization follow to provide employees with brand knowledge in order to enhance their brand-consistent behavior (BCB).

Studies have stressed the impact of brand communication on employee's brand-consistent behavior specifically brand citizenship behavior (Ferdous, 2008; Omilion-Hodges & Baker, 2014; Gray, 2006; De Chernatony, Cottam, & Segal-Horn, 2006). In a particular study, Burmann and Zeplin, (2005) opined that the strength of brand depends on the employees displaying brand citizenship behavior, and such can be achieved through best brand practices. The researchers further assert that brand communication is an important internal brand practice that affects employee's brand commitment, hence leading to employee exhibiting brand citizenship behavior. However, the research failed to provide empirical support to the argument. In this regard, the study did not reveal the direct empirical relationship between brand communication and employee's BCB.

In addition, Burmann et al. (2009) conducted a research on key determinants of internal brand management and conclude that brand communication has influence on employee brand commitment and employee BCB. However, the study failed to provide direct



impact of brand communication on employee BCB. Moreover, the study is important to this study as it provide support to the indirect impact of brand communication on employee BCB. Similarly, further research was suggested with different data set on the determinants of employee BCB in different context. Similarly, Aurand et al., (2005) assert that providing employees with brand knowledge through brand communication affect their ability to deliver brand promise.

In addition Punjaisri et al., (2009) argued that brand commination to employees affect their brand-building behavior. They further argued that effective internal brand communication has an impact on employee's brand commitment, loyalty and their emotional engagement with the brand. So based on this argument, the present study argued that brand communication will have an impact on employees BCB. However, the study focused on employee's ability to follow prescribed roles and responsibilities set up by organization (in-role); therefore employee BCB (extra role) behavior was not considered by the researchers.

In studying the impact of internal branding on employees engagement, Lee, Kim, & Kim, (2013) argued that employee brand communication is crucial in building strong brand as it affects employees behavior and attitude. Their study revealed that internal branding is important to employees as it provides the employees with clear understanding of their roles and direction to deliver brand message and meaning to external customers. Therefore, it has an impact on the perception of employees toward the brand and their interaction with external customer during service encounter. The study failed to provide

empirical support on the effects of brand communication on employee brand behavior particularly BCB. In addition, King and Grace (2010) posited that in order to influence the behavior of employees as required, the organization must provide direction to them. And employees are provided with brand direction through brand communication; as employees know how to effectively carry out their roles and responsibility as organizational members. In the study it was argued employee understanding of brand meaning increases their commitment with the organizational brand; therefore has an impact on their BCB.

Additionally, King and Grace, (2009) argued that if employees in an organization are not given the required brand knowledge, they will not be able to behave in desired manner required by the organization. The researchers further assert that consistent with the external perspective as brand knowledge is considered as the key to realizing customer positive behavior and attitude to the brand, employee brand knowledge is also the key to engaging employee to behave as required. Therefore, brand communication aimed at providing brand knowledge is assumed to have an impact on employee exhibiting brand citizenship behavior. Nevertheless, the researchers did not provide empirical support on how brand communication can encourage employee brand-consistent behavior such as BCB. Furthermore, Yang et al., (2015) stressed the importance of brand communication on employees brand commitment and employee brand behavior. The researchers argued that providing employees with brand understanding not only affects commitment but also affect employee's satisfaction, hence affecting their behavior and attitude toward the brand. Nevertheless, the study considers only two internal branding practices (training

and communication), and further studies was suggested to include practice such as brand leadership in order to enhance employee brand behavior.

Furthermore, Porricelli, et al (2014) conducted a study on the impact of internal brand management on employee BCB through mediating effect of employee brand commitment and job satisfaction. The study consider brand communication as an important practice that induce BCB. Nevertheless, the study did not provide direct empirical link between this practices to BCB. Furthermore, Burmann and König, (2011) in their study on the impact of internal brand on BCB and brand commitment on employees of Germany media company, the result revealed significant connection between brand commitment, BCB and brand communication.

Similarly, brand communication is argued to be a mechanism through which internal brand process can be achieved (King & Grace, 2012). The researchers assert that providing employees with brand related information increase their brand commitment and hence willingness to exhibit brand citizenship behavior in order to achieve brand goals. In addition, Chiang et al., (2013) in their study revealed significant connection between brand communication and employee BCB. The study however, considered corporate brand practices such as brand communication in predicting employee BCB. Furthermore, the study focused only on customer contact employees; as such backstage employees were not considered. Moreover, the study is important to this study as it provide support to the possible mediation between brand communication and employee BCB.

## **2.9 Employee Brand Fit**

Management researchers, consultants and practitioners have expressed their interest in the study of person-environment fit (P-E) due to the fact that it has an impact on employee's attitude and behavior. Therefore, researchers are concerned on how individuals behave in an organizational settings which may have a great impact on the organization or brand (Chatman, 1989). According to Edwards et al.(1999) there are two basic differences between person and environment. First is the difference between objective and subjective environment. The researchers argued that the objective environment is seen as the physical, social, situations and events as they are or exist irrespective of person perceptions. Meanwhile, subjective environment is viewed as the perception of person with regards to situations, and events. As such, it is assume that the objective environment affect the subjective environment. Furthermore, Edwards et al., (1999) assert that another distinction is between the values of the person and the supplies in the environment that are available to fulfill the values. They argued that values are the desires of the person and therefore signify interest, preferences, and goals. On the other hand supplies are seen as the aspect of the environment that may fulfill the person's values such as rewards.

Review of literatures has shown that P-E has been argued to have a positive influence on employee's job satisfaction, organizational commitment, identification, and career success (Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001). Despite the effort by researchers to make distinction between various P-E fits, fits are said to occur at different levels. According to Lauver and Kristof-Brown, (2001) P-E fits can be distinguished between different

concepts such as person-job fit, person-organization or brand fit, person-vocation fit, and lastly co-worker or group fit. The concern of this study is the employee brand fit. In particular, the study focuses on brand fit as it was argued to have great impact on employee's willingness to exhibit extra-role behavior (Helm, Renk, & Mishra 2016).

The concept of employee brand fit has been considered by marketing researchers and practitioners to be a crucial in determining the attitude and behavior of employees towards the organization's brand. Review of literatures has shown that researchers have used different ways to conceptualized employee brand fit, this result in difficulty conceptualization of the construct (Matanda & Ndubisi, 2013). Some researchers view employee brand fit in terms of supplementary and complementary fit. Supplementary fit exists when individual possesses characteristics similar to organization or the brand. The most frequently used characteristic in supplementary fit is individual values and organizational or brand values (Chatman, 1989; Chatman, 1991). Complementary fit occurs when individual or the organization or brand provide what the other party wants (Kristof, 1996).

The second perspective of conceptualizing employee brand fit is needs-supplies fit, which occurs when the organization or the brand satisfies individual needs, desires (Edwards et al., 1999). Furthermore, demand-abilities fit perspective proposes that a fit is said to arise when the individual has the capabilities to meet the organizational demands. According to Kristof (1996) these two perspectives can be described by expanding complementary fit, therefore they are part of complementary fit. Based on these arguments put forward

by researchers, the present study conceptualized employee brand fit to include both supplementary and complementary fit. Table 2.3 below contains the summary of employee brand fit definition and its dimensions. Therefore, employee brand fit in this study is defined as the compatibility between individual and the organization or brand that occurs when at least one entity provides what the other needs or they share similar values or both.

Literatures have established that employee brand fit can be measured either directly or indirectly (Yaniv & Farkas, 2005). Direct measurement allows the individual to rate how their values are compatible with the brand values. The researchers argued that direct measurement is more effective as it focused on subjective or perceived fit, which is based on individual judgment. Therefore strong fit exists one's perceive by employee, regardless of whether there is similarities between employee's values and values of the brand. Indirect measurement in contrast, called objective or actual fit which reflects the compatibility of individual with verifiable organizational characteristics. Therefore, for the purpose of this study employee brand fit will be measured based on subjective judgment of the employee.

Table 2.2

*Table Summary of Employee Brand Fit Definitions and Dimensions*

No.	Author (s)/Year	Definition	Dimensions
1	Chatman, (1989)	The congruence between the values of brand and the values of persons.	Uni-dimensional
2	Chatman, (1991)	The congruence between patterns of brand values and patterns of individual values.	Uni-dimensional
3	Cable and DeRue, (2002)	As congruence between employees' needs and supplies they receive in return for their services and contributions on job from the organization.	Uni-dimensional
4	Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos, (2014)	The perception of employee on the congruence between his or her values and the brand value.	Uni-dimensional
5	Matanda and Ndubisi, (2013)	As need-satisfaction and compatibility between individual employee values and organizational values	Uni-dimensional
6	Morley (2007)	The compatibility between employee and brand that occurs when one provides what the other needs or they share same fundamental characteristics or both.	Uni-dimensional
7	Helm et al. (2016)	The congruence between the values of brand and the values of persons.	Actual congruity and Ideal self-congruity

Past studies have stressed the importance of brand fit on the behavior and attitude of employees on his or her organization and the brand, hence affecting brand-consistent behavior (Jiafeng & Wei, 2010). Lauver and Kristof-Brown (2001) in their study revealed that there is positive relationship between employee engaging in extra role and fit when he or she perceived balance between the organization or brand value and his or her value.

In another research, Yaniv and Farkas, (2005) opined that the higher the organization or brand fit the higher the employees satisfaction, identification and brand commitment and the more likely employee exhibit extra-role behaviors in order to achieve brand goal. Vondey (2008) while studying the connection between servant leadership behavior and citizenship behavior revealed that employees with higher fit are likely to exhibit brand citizenship behavior.

In addition, Silverthorne (2004) in his study revealed that there is positive connection between employee commitment and satisfaction with person-fit, enhance based on this finding the present study assumed that brand fit may have an impact on BCB. Furthermore, Morley (2007) argued that achieving high degree of fit is desirable in terms of positive brand related outcomes such brand satisfaction, commitment, identification, knowledge sharing and brand citizenship behavior. In another research, Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos (2014) revealed positive relationship between employee brand fit and brand identification and argued that previous studies have revealed positive relationship between brand identification and citizenship behavior. In a particular study, Gammoh et al., (2014) studied the role of personality congruence between sale's person own personality and the personality of the brand with brand identification, the result of 246 revealed significant relationship between salesperson personality congruence with the personality of the brand. The researchers further revealed positive relationship between brand identification and behavioral outcomes performance.



Additionally, Helm, et al (2016) in their study on how employees' perceived their employers' corporate brand, the result of 283 employees in Germany revealed positive relationship between congruity of brand actual self and brand citizenship behavior. In another research, Ali, Ahmadi, Mohammadpour, and Baghbani, (2014) revealed positive effect between person-organization fit and employee commitment, hence commitment as a driver of citizenship behavior is assumed here that it will have impact on citizenship behavior. Tugal and Kilic (2015) in their study revealed positive influence between brands fit and brand citizenship behavior. In addition, Boukis et al., (2014) while studying the relationship between internal marketing and different fits, the study revealed positive connection between brand fit and brand-supporting behavior. In particular, the study is important to this research because employee brand fit was used as a mediator between internal marketing and brand-supporting behavior and the study consider it as an important mediating variable between internal branding and employee brand-supporting behavior (in-role and extra role behavior).

However, it was argued in branding literature that internal brand building is crucial to the success of brand, as it help to enhance and stimulate employee brand fit (Burmam & Zeplin, 2005; Foster et al., 2010; Punjaisri & Wilson, 2011; Vallaster & de Chernatony, 2006; Vallaster, 2004). Therefore, improving internal branding practices was argued to play an important role in enhancing employee brand fit. Specifically, MacLavery et al., (2007) posited that through internal branding practices such as brand leadership, brand reward, brand training, and brand communication organization align and empower their employee to deliver the brand to meet customer expectation. Thus, internal branding is

crucial to improving and enhancing brand fit (Boukis & Gounaris, 2014). Table 2.4 below provide summary of some predictors of employee brand fit as used by researchers. Besides, researches have shown that employees' are provided with clear understanding of the brand through internal branding practices which not only enhances their brand knowledge but also stimulate and enhance their brand fit (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2011; Vallaster & de Chernatony, 2006). In this regard, Punjaisri et al., (2013) posited that brand-oriented leaders provide their followers with a clear brand vision, their roles and responsibilities as a brand representatives which help to encourage their fit with the brand. Moreover, it was argued that providing employees with clear brand knowledge help to bridge the gap between actual and ideal work setting which in turn increase employees fit with the organization (Vallaster & de Chernatony, 2005). Additionally, it was argued that transformation leaders help their followers to internalized organizational values and to identify themselves with the organization, this will help to fosters shared values (Huang, Cheng, & Chou, 2005).

Additionally, congruence between employee values and brand values can be achieve through compensation system used by organization to motivate and reward employees for exhibiting positive brand behavior (Aurand et al., 2005). Equally, Chang et al., (2012) posited that organization can enhance employee's fit with the brand by providing equitable brand reward. Furthermore, brand training was also argued to enhance the alignment between employee's values and brand values (MacLaverly et al., 2007; Punjaisri, et al., 2009; Vallaster & de Chernatony, 2005). It was argued that providing brand training to employee help the employees to have more brand understanding and

skills needed to discharge their roles and responsibilities as brand representative which stimulate their brand fit (Foster et al., 2010). Equally, providing employees with brand information via internal brand communication was considered to stimulates and enhances brand fit (Foster et al., 2010; MacLavery et al., 2007; Matanda & Ndubisi, 2013; Punjaisri, et al., 2009). In particular, Chatman, (1991) opined that the more employees are provided with understanding of organization's values and their expected behaviors, the more aligned their values will be with the organization. Hence, providing employees with brand information was considered as a preconditioned for achieving and enhancing brand fit (Burmann & Zeplin, 2005).

Studies conducted have revealed significant connection between internal branding and employee brand fit. For instance, Huang et al. (2005) organization fit was found to be significantly related with charismatic leadership. Equally, Chang et al., (2012) conducted a study on the connection between brand centered human resource and employee BCB. The study revealed significant relationship between brand fit and brand reward. Similarly, Boukis et al.(2014) in their study brand reward was found to have significant relationship with congruence between individual values and brand values. Furthermore, significant relationship was reported between brand training and employee brand fit in studies conducted (Boukis et al., 2014; Chang et al., 2012). Equally, Matanda and Ndubisi, (2013) conducted a study and found that brand communication is significantly related with brand fit. In the same vein, Özçelik and Fındıklı, (2014) have revealed significant relationship between brand communication and employee brand fit.

Besides, previous studies have examine the relationship between brand fit and citizenship behavior, but not as a mechanism for enhancing the influence of internal branding practices on BCB (Morley 2007; Tugal and Kilic 2015; Gammoh et al., 2014) therefore such is missing in literature. However, brand fit has been used by researchers to mediate a particular relationship. Specifically, Matanda and Ndubisi, (2013) have used brand fit as a mediator between internal branding practices such as brand communication and employee intention to stay. Equally, Boukis et al., (2014) have used brand fit as a mediator between internal marketing orientation (IMO) and employee brand-supporting behavior. In addition, Boukis et al., (2017) used employee brand fit as a mediator between internal market orientation and employee's brand enactment. Hence, employee brand fit in this study was consider as the mechanism through which internal branding practices can influence BCB.

In particular, the study consider employee brand fit as a mediating variable between internal branding practices and BCB based on the arguments by Boukis et al., (2014) and Matanda and Ndubusi (2013). Employee brand fit was argued to be an important mediating variable between internal branding and employee brand related outcomes such as brand supporting behavior (in-role and extra role), intention to stay, and satisfaction (Boukis et al., 2017; 2014; Matanda & Ndubusi 2013). To further justify the potential role of brand fit as a mediator, the proposition of Chang et al., (2012) is invoked. The researchers proposed that person-brand fit may be used to better understanding internal branding. Furthermore, the mediating effect of brand fit can be justified by the suggestion made by Lauver and Kristof-Brown, (2001). They suggested that further research is

required to verify their argument that organization should promote higher level of brand fit in order to encourage extra-role behavior. Furthermore, brand fit is considered to have great impact on employees perception of the organization, therefore affecting their behaviors and attitude toward the brand (Boukis et al., 2017, 2014; Helm et al., 2016; Nyadzayo et al., 2015). Hence, the present study argued that through internal branding practices higher brand fit can be promoted which may result in employee's exhibiting citizenship behavior.

Similarly, in line with equity theory (Adam, 1963) which assumes that persons/individuals assess their relationships with others by assessing/evaluating the balance between their inputs and the outputs provided by the other party. In the theory, it was argued that individual in an organization arrive at fair balance by comparing the ratio of inputs and outputs (Walster, Berscheid, & Walster, 1973). Where the individual perceive unfair balance he/she will be demotivated. As such, the individual may either reduce the input, or engage in a negative behavior or disengage the relationship. In this study, employee is at fit or match situation when his/her values match with the values of the brand. Review of literatures has shown that employees values affect their attitudes and behaviors, hence affecting their commitment, loyalty, satisfaction and identification with a particular organization (Chatman, 1991). Hence, if the organization provides fair reward, appropriate leadership, brand communication and training this may lead to high commitment, loyalty and satisfaction and the more likely he/she exhibits BCB. Thus, reference to the literatures reviewed the mediating potentiality of employee brand fit on the connection with internal branding practices and brand citizenship is established.

Table 2.3

*Some Prominent Studies on Predictors of Employee Brand Fit*

No.	Author (s)/Year	Training	Reward	Selection/Evaluation	Recruitment	Communication	Leadership	Internal customer	HR Involvement	Mentor relationship	Values/behaviors	Self-mentoring	Attraction
1	Chatman, (1991) <sup>a</sup>	/	/	/	/					/	/	/	
2	Harris & De Chernatony, (2001) <sup>c</sup>					/							
3	Vallaster & de Chernatony, (2006) <sup>b</sup>		/	/		/	/						
3	Punjaisri & Wilson, (2007) <sup>a</sup>	/	/			/							
4	Punjaisri et al., 2009) <sup>a</sup>	/				/							
5	Punjaisri & Wilson, (2011) <sup>a</sup>	/				/							
6	Chang et al., (2012)	/	/	/									
7	Matanda & Ndubisi, (2013) <sup>a</sup>	/				/		/					
8	King & So (2013) <sup>a</sup>			/	/								/
9	Hurrell & Scholarios, (2014) <sup>b</sup>	/				/							
10	Boukis & Gounaris, (2014) <sup>a</sup>	/	/			/							
11	Boukis et al. (2014) <sup>a</sup>	/	/			/							

Table 2.4 (Continued)

No.	Author (s)/Year	Training	Reward	Selection/Evaluation	Recruitment	Communication	Leadership	Internal customer	HR Involvement	Mentor relationship	Values/behaviors	Self-mentoring	Attraction
12	Preez & Bendixen, (2015) <sup>a</sup>	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
13	Özçelik & Fındıklı, (2014) <sup>a</sup>	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Key: (a) quantitative study (b) qualitative study (c) conceptual													

## 2.10 Conceptual Framework

In line with the literature reviewed, this study proposed a framework to investigate the mediating role of employee brand fit on the connection between internal branding practices and employee's BCB in Nigerian telecommunication sector. The proposed framework has four independent variables namely, brand leadership, brand reward, brand training, and brand communication. Brand citizenship behavior is the dependent variable, while employee brand fit is the mediating variable.

### Internal Branding Practices

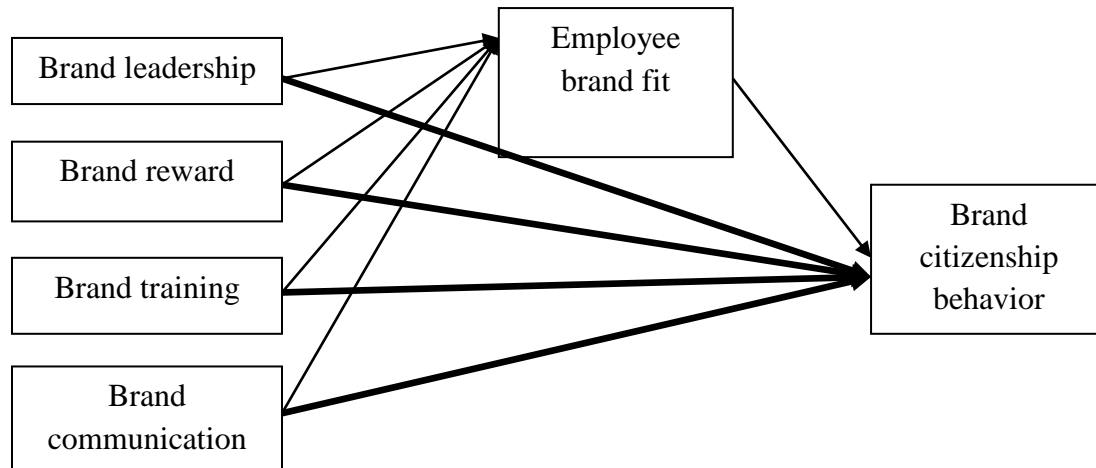


Figure 2.2  
*Research Framework*

In the present study, internal branding practices such as brand leadership, brand reward, brand training and brand communication were employed as antecedents of BCB. Vallaster and de Chernatony(2005) argued that effective brand leadership plays a role in internal brand building as it has an impact on brand-supporting behavior. Several studies have stressed the importance of brand leadership as factor that influences employee's BCB (Punjaisri et al., 2013; Shaari et al., 2015; Morhart et al. 2009; Wallace de Chernatony 2013). In addition, Punjaisri et al (2013) assert that brand leadership is a driver of brand-supporting behavior, therefore, using appropriate brand leadership exert great impact on their brand behavior. In this regard, brand-oriented leaders are argued to inspire their followers to live the brand, to be more committed and more willing to engage for the brand therefore exhibit positive brand behavior (Uen et al., 2012). Consequently, using appropriate brand leadership induce the employee to engage in BCB (Shaari et al 2015).



Furthermore, in line with social exchange theory where the employee perceived high-quality leader-member exchange (LMX) are more likely to reciprocate by exhibiting brand citizenship behavior (BCB). Therefore, in this study brand leadership is adapted as an important internal branding practice that affects the employee's behavior and attitude toward the organization. Another important internal branding practice is brand reward which is found to be an important predictor of BCB.

Brand reward is argued to be an important internal brand practice that balances the relationship between employee and organization (Ellinger et al. 2013). Burmann et al. (2009) posit that incentive to employees is crucial as it affects their brand building behavior and attitude. Consequently, several studies have recognized the importance of brand reward in predicting employee's behavior and in particular its impact on the brand success (Shaari 2012; Punjaisri & Wilson 2011; Ong & Teh 2012). It was further argued that organization can use practice such as brand reward to encourage employees to be more committed and willing to exhibit BCB (Nyadzayo et al. 2015). In addition, in line with social exchange theory where the employee perceived that the organization has provided a fair reward, he/she will reciprocate by exhibiting brand citizenship behavior (BCB) in order to enhance brand identity. As a result of this, the present study adopts brand reward as a factor that affects brand citizenship behavior. In order ensure brand-consistent behavior organization should provide employees with brand reward and brand-related training. Therefore, brand training is also crucial in encouraging employees to exhibit BCB.

Another important internal branding practice that has an impact on employee's BCB is brand training. Employees in an organization particularly service brands are considered to be the deliverers of brand promise to consumers, therefore their capacity to deliver the brand promise depends on their understanding of what the brand value is (King & So 2013). Consequently, employees are provided with brand knowledge and skills needed to act as brand representative through brand training (Punjaisri, et al., 2009). In addition, it was argued that employees who are satisfied with organization's supportive practices such as brand training are more likely to feel effective while engaging for the brand, hence affecting their willing to exhibit BCB (Chiang et al. 2013). Furthermore, in line with social exchange theory, where the organization provide employee with required brand training such employee will feel oblige to pay back by exhibiting brand citizenship behavior. Devasagayam et al., (2010) posited that organizations with internal branding mindset focus their brand strategies to employees so as to increase their understanding of the brand which has an impact on organizational success. Devasagayam et al., (2010) further argued that employees generate brand understanding through brand communication and training programs.

Understanding the brand meaning has a great impact on employee's brand-consistent behavior, hence, affecting their willingness to exhibit brand citizenship behavior. As a result of this, the present study adapts brand communication as a factor that determines employee brand citizenship behavior. Organization provide employee with brand knowledge through other practices such as brand communication, therefore, brand communication is deemed as an important predictor of employee's BCB.

Moreover, brand communication is considered as one of the internal branding practices that has an impact on employees to exhibit brand citizenship behavior. In this regard, Gray, (2006) opined that providing employees with brand information through internal communication enhances their ability to help customers during service delivery. Moreover, Lee et al., (2013) argued that employee understands the brand meaning and their roles and responsibilities through brand communication; aids them to behave in consistent with brand promise. Furthermore, in line with social exchange theory, if the organization provides adequate brand communication, the employee will exhibit BCB in an exchange. Therefore, employees who are provided with brand knowledge may not engage in a behavior that may tarnish the image of the organization's brand. Based on these arguments the present study adapts brand communication as an internal branding practice that may affect brand citizenship behavior. Therefore, effective brand communication is required to enhance employee's BCB, as employees are crucial to the success of the brand.

According to Helm et al. (2016) employee's BCB is significantly related to congruence between individual employee and the organization. Therefore, exhibiting extra role behavior by employees is argued to depend on their fit with the organization (Boukis et al., 2017, 2014; Yaniv & Farkas, 2005). In the same vein, Lauver and Kristof-Brown, (2001) argued that higher fit with the organization's values result in higher extra role behavior an employee may likely exhibit in order to achieve organizational objective. Review of literature has shown that employee's brand fit and employee's BCB are encouraged and enhanced among employees in an organization through internal branding

practices such as brand leadership, brand reward, brand training and brand communication (Boukis et al., 2017, 2014; Burmann et al., 2009; Burmann & Zeplin, 2005; Matanda & Ndubisi, 2013; Shaari et al., 2015; Chang et al., 2012; MacLavery et al., 2007; Kaufmann et al., 2012). In particular, brand fit was considered as a mediating variable in line with the arguments by Boukis et al (2014) and Matanda and Ndubisi (2013) as an important mediating variable between internal branding and employee brand related outcomes such as brand-supportive behavior (in-role and extra role), and intention to stay. Therefore, employee brand fit is adopted as a mediating variable through which organization can encourage employee's BCB. Equally, brand fit is adopted in line with equity theory Adams (1963) which assume that where employees perceive balance between their inputs and outputs from organization such may enhance their fit with the organization and motivate the employees to engage in a behavior that may benefit the organization.

### **2.11 Underpinning theory**

The relationship between internal branding practices and employee BCB can be explained by social exchange theory (SET) (Blau, 1964), and has been used by researchers to explain motivation behind employee's behaviors and attitude in an organization (Wikhamn & Hall, 2012). On the other hand, the mediating effect of employee brand fit can also be explained by theory such as equity theory (Adams 1963) (Boukis et al., 2014). Thus, in the current study SET is used to explain the effect of

internal branding practices on employee BCB and equity theory is used to explain the mediating effect of employee brand fit.

### **2.11.1 Social exchange theory**

SET (Blau, 1964) is considered the best theory that can best explain the connection between the exogenous variables and the endogenous variable in the current study. SET is seen as the most influential theory that explains work place behavior of employees (Settoon, Bennett, & Liden, 1996). The researchers further assert that the theory has been used to explain why employees engage in behaviors that are neither formally rewarded nor contractually enforceable, but yet beneficial to the organization or the brand. The theory assumed that individual relationship is formed by the use of subjective cost-benefit analysis. Therefore, the fundamental basis for this theory is providing extra benefit than cost will produce lasting mutual trust and attraction (Blau, 1964). The central issue in the theory is the unspecified obligation, which is to say that when an individual does something in favor to another it is expected that the individual will pay back with something in favor (Shore & Barksdale, 1998). Blau (1964) argued that where there is no balance in the fulfillment of the obligations such might leads to negative consequences. As such individual will respond to a positive treatment with something positive and reverse as in case of negative treatment by one party.

According to Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos (2014) the theory tries to explain the positive behaviors of employees toward the organization based on give and take relationship. That employee evaluates the quality of relationship between them and the

organization, where the employees believe that the organization values their input and cares about their well-being, then such employee feels obliged to pay back by engaging in brand-consistent behavior, hence exhibiting BCB so as to achieve the organization's brand goals. To build successful relations with employees, organization should establish an environment that supports positive exchange (King & Grace, 2012). Chang et al. (2012) posited that where employees perceive that there is high quality social exchange between them and organization that will increase their level of commitment, trust, respect and loyalty. Furthermore, the researchers assert that employees who are satisfied through exchange relationship are found to have better brand attitude and behavior. Hence, employee who is happy with the work environment has the desire to reciprocate by exhibiting behaviors that are beyond the formal requirement of their job.

In addition Asha and Jyothi, (2013) opined that where employee believe that his/her needs are provided by the organization, he/she reciprocate by making positive and proactive contributions to the success of the organization. The researchers further argued that organization needs to have significant interest between employee's value and organization values or brand values. In their conceptual paper, Aggarwal and Bhargava(2009) termed such relationship between employees and organization as psychological contract. Psychological contract is argued to be what an employee owes to the organization and what can be expected from organization in return. The researchers further argued that such relationship may be impacted by such practices as reward, training, and career management.

Consequently, in the present study it is assumed that where the organization internalized its brand strategies which aimed at encouraging favorable attitude and behavior, employee will be committed and feel obliged to pay back by engaging in a behavior that will benefit the organization. That is to say he or she will exhibit brand-consistent behavior which will affect the delivery of brand promise to meet customer's expectations, hence achieving brand goals. Thus, where the organization provide employees with adequate brand training, fair brand reward and appropriate brand leadership and brand communication the employees will have to give back to the organization favorable attitude and behavior as an exchange. Henceforth, employees could balance the relationship by engaging in BCB in order to achieve organization's brand goal.

### **2.11.2 Equity Theory**

Equity theory was first introduced by behavioral psychologist (Adams, 1963). The theory was drawn from special exchange, dissonance, and social comparison theories which attempt to make prediction on how individuals manage their relationships with others (Huseman, Hatfield, & Miles, 1987). The theory, assumed that individuals assess their connections with others by balancing their inputs against the associated outputs. The theory was built on the belief that individual may be demotivated if he or she perceived that his or her inputs are greater than the outputs. Or individual who perceives that he or she is over rewarded or under rewarded will experience distress, and such may leads to effort by individual towards restore equity. As such, individuals may respond to this by reducing their efforts, becoming disgruntled or engaging in a behavior that may tarnish

the image of the organization or may finally terminate the relationship (Boukis et al., 2014).

The theory assume that where the individuals perceived a balance or their inputs are fairly and adequately rewarded by the outputs, such individuals may feel satisfied, motivated, more committed and exert more effort in achieving organizational objectives (Pritchard, 1969). The inputs of individuals include efforts, loyalty, commitment, skills, ability, flexibility, hard work, acceptance of others, and trust on superior and personal sacrifice. On the other hand outputs include rewards, job security, stimulus, sense of advancement, recognition, training, favorable leadership style, effective brand communication, sense of achievement, and reputation etc. According to Boukis and Gounaris, (2014) an employee evaluates their brand fit by balancing their inputs and the associated outputs. They further assert that inputs may include effort from the employee and their level of compliance to the organizational and brand policies; on the other hand the outputs include pay, benefits and rewards.

In the present study, employees evaluate their relationship with the brand by comparing their values with the values of the brand. Where the employees perceive a fair balance between their values and the values of the brand, then the employees are said to be at match situation. Therefore, the employees are motivated or become satisfied. Individual employees' values affect his/her behaviors and attitudes, hence affecting his/her commitment, identification, trust, satisfaction and loyalty to a particular brand (Chatman, 1991). As such, if the employees perceive balance between their values and the values of



the brand, such may lead to high brand commitment, loyalty, identification, satisfaction and enhance their BCB. Organization through internal branding practices such as brand leadership, brand reward, brand training and brand communication provide employees with understanding of brand values, hence enhancing their brand fit (Burmman & Zeplin, 2005; Matanda & Ndubisi, 2013; Punjaisri, et al., 2009).

In addition, employee is said to be at fit by comparing their inputs such as skills, loyalty, commitment, trust, ability, hard work, and identification with the corresponding outputs such as fair reward, appropriate brand leadership, effective brand communication and required training. Where the organization provides employees with fair reward, required training, appropriate leadership, communicate brand knowledge it is expected that such employees will be motivated to exhibit brand consistent behavior particularly BCB. Consequently, the employee is said to be at fit when there is balance between what they give as input and what they receive as output from the organization; as such the employee will be motivated to exhibit BCB.

## **2.12 Hypotheses Development**

Based on the reviewed literature and theoretical justifications in the current study, hypotheses are formulated for further empirical testing and validation. For the purpose of the study, hypotheses H1-H4 were formulated based on the first objective of the study, which examines the connection between the IV and the DV. The second objective provides the ground for the formulation of H5-H8 and is based on the connection between the mediating variable and the exogenous variables. The third objective provides

the ground for formulating H9 that is the relationship between the mediating variable and the dependent variable. Meanwhile, hypotheses H10-H13 were based on the role of mediating variable on the connection between the exogenous variable and the endogenous variable.

#### **2.12.1 Relationship between Brand Leadership and Brand citizenship behavior**

Brand leadership has been argued to have great impact on employee's attitude and behavior. Leaders in an organization are seen as role model representing the values of the organization, therefore exact significant influence on employee's positive attitude and behavior (Hayward, 2010). Equally, Kaufmann et al., (2012), posited that leaders in an organization are considered as mediators that encourage employees to exhibit positive brand behavior. In this regard, brand-oriented leadership is considered as the starting point for employee's brand-building behavior, as leaders are considered as role model. Vallaster and de Chernatony, (2005) argued that the leader is responsible for providing a clear brand vision and also facilitating social interaction. Wallace, de Chernatony, et al.(2013b) posited that the behavior of the leader in an organization is crucial as it affect the behavior of employees. Equally, the researchers assert that where the employees percieve leaders support behavior is favorable, they reciprocate by exhibiting a behavior that benefits the organization, hence engage in BCB.

Similarly, brand leadership styles employed by leaders in an organization are argued to enhance and encourage brand-orienetd behaviors such as BCB (Morhart et al., 2009; Shaari et al., 2015). Vallaster & de Chernatony(2005) argued that leaders in an

organization encourage their followers to engage in a positive brand behavior by providing clear vision and facilitating social interaction. Similarly, Punjaisri et al.(2013) discovered that brand building behavior is found to be influenced by specific brand leadership, therefore they argued that leadership is an antecedent of brand-building behavior which include both in-role and extra role behavior. Vallaster & de Chernatony(2006) posited that during internal brand building the leader initiates and facilitates behavioral changes that are consistent with the desired brand identity.

In addition, Kaufmann et al.(2012) argued that leaders in an organization play a crucial role in shaping the behaviors of employees. The researchers further assert that brand leadership style employed by leaders exact significant influence on employee brand commitment which serve as an encouragement to exhibit positive brand behavior such as BCB. Studies conducted have revealed a positive relationship between brand leadership and BCB. Shaari et al.(2015) in their study, both transformational and transactional brand leadership are found to have significant relationship with employee's BCB. Equally, Morhart et al.(2009) in their study revealed a significant relationship between brand leadership and employee's BCB. Similarly, in line with SET where the employee perceive high-quality LMX such employee will feel obliged to reciprocate by engaging in a behavior that will benefit the organization, hence exhibit BCB.

The theoretical and empirical literature discussed the relationship between brand leadership and employee's BCB. Thus, the subsequent hypothesis is formulated:

**Hypothesis 1.** There is a significant positive relationship between brand leadership and brand citizenship behavior.

### **2.12.2 Relationship between Brand Reward and Brand Citizenship Behavior**

The goal of internal branding management is to align the behaviors and attitude of employees with the brand value so that they deliver what the brand promises to the external customer. Therefore, it is the employees that deliver the brand promise made to the customer, therefore, they are believed to have an impact on the success of an organization brand. As such, for effective delivery of brand promise, the employees need to be motivated and satisfied with his or her job (Ellinger et al., 2013). Organizations motivate their employees to achieve the desired goal through brand reward system which is aimed at encouraging favorable attitude and behavior toward organization's brand (Lee et al., 2013). As in the present study, the goal of the organization is to encourage positive brand-consistent behavior in order to build strong brand with high equity. It is argued that such behavior can be encouraged through brand reward.

According to Asha and Jyothi, (2013) exhibiting citizenship behavior depends on the perception the employee has on the reward. Where employee perceives the reward to be fair as compared with their work effort, his or her satisfaction and commitment will increase. When an employee is satisfied and committed to the brand he or she may exhibit citizenship behavior. This is in line with the argument put forward by Papasolomou and Vrontis (2006) that organization offered its employees both tangible and intangible rewards in order to motivate them to feel part-owners of an organization

and to work toward its success. Also in line with the argument put forward by Lee et al., (2013) that reward leads to employee job satisfaction, employee retention and innovative behavior. Hence, reward/recognition is considered as an important practice that determines the effectiveness of internal branding (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007).

According to Punjaisri and Wilson, (2011) for effective delivery of brand promise to meet customer's expectations, organizations need to internalize their branding strategies to employees. In this regard, reward/recognition was argued to limit the effectiveness of internal branding. Therefore, for organization to build a strong brand through internal branding strategies reward/recognition must be provided to employees as it affects the employee's behavior and attitude. In a particular study, (Shaari et al., 2012) revealed a significant connection between brand reward and brand citizenship behavior. Similarly, in line with social exchange theory, an employee that is fairly rewarded and recognized for his or her contribution to the success of the organization is likely to engage in brand citizenship behavior. This is based on the argument that favorable treatment will be reciprocated with favorable behavior. Hence, based on these arguments put forward the following hypothesis is formulated.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is a significant relationship between brand reward and brand citizenship behavior.

### **2.12.3 Relationship between Brand Training and Brand Citizenship Behavior.**

Internal branding literature has established that providing internal quality service has a great impact on employees brand perception (Punjaisri et al. 2009). This is because

providing such quality service to employees has an impact on their brand commitment, satisfaction, identification, and engagement to the brand. Hence, these affect employee's brand-consistent behavior both in role and extra-role behavior. According to Lee et al., (2013) brand training not only improve employees performance but also help them to feel they are part of the brand and to identify that their attitude and behavior influence brand performance. Hence providing employee with required brand training stimulate and enhance their brand behavior. In addition, it was also argued that employees that are satisfied with organization's supportive practices such as brand training can be motivated to exhibit extra role behavior (Chiang et al., 2013). Besides, Nyadzayo et al. (2015) opined that organization can use practices such as brand training to promote extra role behaviors among their employees.

According to Punjaisri, et al.(2009) brand training has a great impact on employees brand- building behavior. In addition, brand training is argued to be required by employees to be able to understand brand value and their understanding will be reflected in their brand-building behavior (King & So, 2013). Brand training is considered to be an effective means to develop employee to live the brand (Vallaster & de Chernatony, 2005). In a particular study, Chang et al. (2012) revealed a positive relationship between brand training and brand citizenship behavior. In line with social exchange theory, where employee perceived that required brand training is provided to them, such may encourage them to reciprocate by engaging in BCB. Based on these arguments put forward the in this study, the following hypothesis is formulated.

**Hypotheses 3:** There is a significant relationship between brand training and brand citizenship behavior.

#### **2.12.4 Relationship between Brand Communication and Brand Citizenship Behavior**

Organizations in a competitive marketplace, are struggling to achieve a long-lasting competitive advantage. As such, organizations have realized the power of employees in achieving such goal (King & So, 2013). Therefore, it is the responsibility of the employees to deliver the brand promise to the customer. The researchers further argued that for such promise to be delivered as intended, the employee must have an understanding of the brand and what it means to him or her in relation to the responsibility and role he or she will play in the process. King and Grace, (2009) posited that the key to delivering brand promise by employee is brand knowledge. This is because of the fact that such knowledge affects the attitudes and behaviors of employees toward the organization's brand. In order to ensure that the employees behave in a consistent way, he or she must be provided with brand knowledge. Yang et al.(2015) posited that internal branding is aimed at providing employees with brand knowledge which enables them to understand and support the brand goal. The researchers further assert that such brand knowledge is provided to employees through brand communication.

Punjaisri, et al. (2008) believed that successful practice of internal branding leads to having more committed employees who deliver the brand promise. Therefore, to

guarantee that promise made to customers is delivered, an organization needs to engage in activities such as brand rewarding, training, and internal communication (Punjaisri, Evanschitzky, et al., 2009). King and Grace (2005) opined that consistent delivery of brand promise depends on employee consistent behavior. They further argued that in order to encourage consistent behavior, organization through its internal branding management must continuously provide support for the employees. Thus, brand communication has a great impact on employees exhibiting BCB in an organization.

In line with social exchange theory, providing adequate brand knowledge through internal brand communication serves as an encouragement to employees to exhibit extra role behavior (BCB) which affects delivery of brand promise. This is because providing brand knowledge affects employees brand commitment, brand loyalty and brand identification. Therefore, deliver promise made to meet customers' expectations of the brand, hence, achieving competitive advantage. Based on these arguments, the following hypothesis is formulated:

**Hypothesis 4:** There is a significant positive relationship between brand communication and brand citizenship behavior.

#### **2.12.5 Relationship between Internal Branding Practices and Employee Brand Fit**

Achieving alignment between employee's value and brand value is crucial to organizations, and such can be achieved through internal brand building (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007). Therefore, internal branding encompasses practices such as brand leadership, brand reward, brand training and brand communication, in order for



organizations to achieve such alignment (MacLavery et al., 2007). Hence, internal branding practices are crucial as they stimulate and enhance employee's brand fit.

#### **3.4.5.1 Brand Leadership and Employee Brand Fit**

Brand leadership has been argued to play a crucial role in developing and enhancing brand understanding among individual employees in an organization ( Punjaisri et al., 2013; Morhart et al., 2009; Vallaster & de Chernatony, 2005; Vallaster, 2004). In particular, it was argued that leaders in an organization provide employees with a clear understanding of brand values, this enhance not only their brand knowledge but also stimulate their fit with the brand (Vallaster & de Chernatony, 2006). Furthermore, Kaufmann et al.(2012) posited that brand oriented leadership support and enhance the internalization of brand values into individual employees own-self which results in congruence between employee and the organization. Equally, brand leadership has been argued to be a mechanism through which an alignment between brand value and employee value can be achieve (MacLavery et al., 2007). This is because leaders in an organization play an important role in providing employees with clear brand vision, their roles and responsibilities as brand representatives which help to stimulate and enhance their fit with the brand (Punjaisri et al., 2013).

Moreover, Vallaster and de Chernatony, (2005) posited that leaders in an organization help their followers to bridge the gap between the actual and ideal work setting which enhance their fit with the organization. In addition, it was argued that transformational leaders enhance employees fit with the organization by encouraging and helping the

employees to internalized the organization values and to identify themselves with the organization (Huang et al., 2005). Therefore, using appropriate brand leadership style is seen as a prerequisite of achieving employee's brand fit, as such have a great impact on employees perception on the brand (Punjaisri et al., 2013). Furthermore, drawing on trust within the organization (Punjaisri et al., 2013), employee's brand fit depends largely on the level of trust the employee's has on the brand specific leaders. Equally, empirically significant relationship was reported between leadership and organization fit (Huang et al, 2005). Hence, based on these arguments put forward, the following hypothesis is formulated:

**Hypothesis 5:** There is significant relationship between brand leadership and employee brand fit.

#### **3.4.5.2 Brand Reward and Employee Brand Fit**

Another important internal branding practice that is argued to have great impact on employee brand fit is brand reward. Brand reward is considered by researchers as an internal branding practice that organization use to achieve congruence or alignment between employee's values and brand values (Aurand et al., 2005; Jyothi, & Raj, 2011; King & So, 2013; Punjaisri, et al., 2009; Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007). Specifically, Aurand et al. (2005) posited that fit between individual employee and brand value can be more enhanced through compensation system that is aimed at motivating and rewarding employee's positive behavior. Equally, Papasolomou and Vrontis, (2006) opined that getting the right reward is a prerequisite of achieving congruence between employees

value and the value of the organization. Therefore, organizations should engaged more in rewarding their employees so as to build effective internal branding.

Moreover, Cable and Judge (1994), posited that reward systems of an organization if are structured in accordance with organizational values, goals and culture, employee's fit with the organization can be enhanced. It was equally suggested that via practice such as equitable brand reward employee's identification and brand fit can be encourage (Chang et al., 2012). In the same vein, rewarding employees based on display of behaviors that foster brand values, was argued to be crucial in achieving an alignment between employee's inputs (abilities, skills, commitment, and loyalty) and outputs from the organization (Chang et al., 2012; Chiang et al., 2013). Similarly, based on equity theory of Adam (1963), it is argued that employee's that perceive balance between their inputs and corresponding outputs from the organization such as brand reward, that will stimulate and enhance their fit with the organization. Empirically, brand reward was revealed to have significant impact on employee brand fit (Chang et al., 2012). Thus, based on these arguments the following hypothesis is formulated:

**Hypothesis 6:** There is significant relationship between brand reward and employee brand fit.

#### **3.4.5.3 Brand Training and Employee Brand Fit**

Internal branding literature have established the crucial role of brand training in achieving an alignment between the employee value and the brand values (MacLaverly et al., 2007; Punjaisri et al., 2013; Vallaster & de Chernatony, 2005). Foster et al. (2010) posited that

fit between employee and brand require the organization to continually provide employees with brand knowledge, their roles and responsibilities and skills needed through their training programs. Equally, it was argued that training employees provide employees with opportunities such as career development, enhance their brand performance, their intention to stay, and their brand fit (Foster et al., 2010; Lee & Wu, 2011; Punjaisri, et al., 2009). In addition, Matanda and Ndubisi, (2013) posited that internal brand building via brand training aimed at instilling brand values in employees enhanced employees brand identification, loyalty, commitment and their fit with the brand.

In addition, Lauver and Kristof-Brown (2001) argued that to enhanced employee brand fit, organizations should design their brand training program that will provide employees with brand knowledge, improve their skills and abilities, that will increase their brand fit. Hence, it is argued that the extent to which employees are provided with brand training, help to strengthen their relationship with the organization which in turn stimulate and enhance their fit with the brand (Lee & Wu, 2011; Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007). Empirically, brand training was found to have significant impact on employee brand fit (Chang et al., 2012). Similarly, based on equity theory of Adam (1963), it is argued that employee's that perceive balance between their inputs and corresponding outputs from the organization such as brand training, such will stimulate and enhance their fit with the organization. Therefore, based on these arguments the following hypothesis is formulated:

**Hypothesis 7:** There is significant relationship between brand training and employee brand fit

#### **3.4.5.4 Brand Communication and Employee Brand Fit**

Review of literatures have established the importance of brand communication in achieving internal brand building (Burmam & Zeplin, 2005; Burmann et al., 2009; King & So, 2013). Chatman (1991) argued that organizations through practice such as communication provide employees with more understanding of organization's values, and their expected behaviors. It was further asserted that the more organizations attempt to influence employees, the more similar their values become to the organization or brand. Moreover, Burmann and Zeplin, (2005) argued that providing employees with brand information via brand communication is a precondition of achieving brand fit, therefore brand communication is considered to have great impact on employee brand fit.

Additionally, Boukis and Gounaris (2014) posited that through formal and informal communication, organization recover, enhance and stimulate employees brand fit. It was equally argued that to achieve an alignment between the employee values and the brand values, employees require organization to provide them with brand knowledge this in turn help to enhance their fit with the brand (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2011). Moreover, Matanda and Ndubisi (2013) posited that organizations with brand-oriented mind set, effectively communicate brand knowledge to their employees which help to promotes employee brand fit. It was also argued that the more employee are provided with brand information, the more comfortable they will be with the brand and the more fit they are

with the brand (Matanda & Ndubisi, 2013). Thus, based on these arguments, the following hypothesis is formulated:

**Hypothesis 8:** There is significant relationship between brand communication and employee brand fit.

#### **2.12.6 Relationship between Employee Brand Fit and Brand Citizenship Behavior**

Employee brand fit is considered by researchers to have a great impact on the employee's perception of the organization, hence affect their attitude and behaviors (Boukis et al., 2017; Helm et al., 2016; Nyadzayo et al., 2015). Equally, it was argued that positive attitudes and behaviors from employees was a result of the fit they have with the organization (Edwards, 1996; Edwards et al., 1999). Research has shown that when employees perceive fit between their values and the values of the brand, it may result in higher brand commitment, satisfaction, engagement and brand identification (Yaniv & Farkas, 2005). Therefore, employee brand fit affects employee's brand behavior, particularly (BCB) (Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001).

In a particular study, Lauver and Kristof-Brown (2001) argued that the higher the employees brand fit is, the more extra-role employees exhibit in order to achieve organization's brand goals. Morley (2007) opined that organization can encourage high brand commitment, satisfaction, loyalty and brand citizenship behavior, by developing and enhancing brand fit. Furthermore, Lohndorf and Diamantopoulos (2014) argued that brand identification positively affect BCB, and such identification is as a result of a match between personal values of employees and the values of the brand. In their study,

Helm et al. (2016) asserted that employees that are more inclined to enhance brand fit are found to be more willing to exhibit BCB. Therefore, organization should align the behaviors and attitude of employees with the brand values. As this may lead to higher match between personal values of employees and the values of the brand, it is more likely that the employees will exhibit BCB. Empirically, employee brand fit was found to have a significant impact on employee's BCB (Helm et al., 2016). Based on these arguments, the present study formulated the following hypothesis:

**Hypothesis 9:** There is a significant relationship between employee brands fit and brand citizenship behavior.

#### **2.12.7 The Mediating Effect of Employee Brand Fit**

Employee brand fit is viewed as the perception of employees on the congruence between their individual values and the values of the brand or when the organization provides the employee with what he or she needs. It was argued that employee's attitudes, behaviors and other employee's level outcomes were as a result of fit the employee has with the organization (Edwards et al., 1999; Edwards, 1996). In addition, brand fit has been argued to have great impact on employee's perception of the brand which eventually affect their willingness to exhibit BCB (Boukis et al., 2017; Burmann & Zeplin, 2005; Chang et al., 2012). Equally, Lauver and Kristof-Brown, (2001) posited that the higher the employee perceive fit with the brand the more likely they are to exhibit extra role behaviors. Research evidence have shown that through internal branding practices congruence between employee values and the values of the brand can be achieve (Boukis et al., 2017; Burmann & Zeplin, 2005; MacLavery et al., 2007; Punjaisri & Wilson,

2007, 2011). Therefore, employee brand fit exact great impact on employee's BCB, it depends largely on internal brand building (Boukis et al., 2017, 2014; Burmann & Zeplin, 2005; Burmann et al., 2009).

Hence, it is obvious that brand leadership exact great influence on employee brand fit as it was argued to be a process through which alignment between employee's value and brand value can be achieve (MacLavery et al., 2007). Equally, providing employee with fair brand reward was argued to determine the effectiveness of internal brand building, therefore help to enhance and stimulate employee brand fit (Boukis et al., 2014; MacLavery et al., 2007; Punjaisri, et al., 2009). In addition, it was argued that continue providing employees with brand training is crucial to achieving congruence between employee's value and brand value (Foster et al., 2010; Vallaster & de Chernatony, 2005). Providing employee with clear brand understanding via internal brand communication was also argued to enhance employee brand fit (Boukis et al., 2017, 2014; Burmann & Zeplin, 2005).

In this regard, Bravo et al., (2017) posited that employee's that perceive alignment between the brand and their own self-concept are more likely to recommend the brand both internally and externally. And that such alignment can be achieved by organization through such practices as brand communication, brand training and brand reward. Equally, Boukis et al., (2014) posited that although employees often find themselves in an organizations that best fit or match with their values and needs, but due to changes in the organizations they may find themselves in a misfit situation. Organizations that a



highly oriented to their internal branding consider their employee's needs and wants as a priority, therefore through their internal branding practices organization help the employees to recover the fit which will render the employee more inclined to reciprocate by exhibiting extra role behavior (Boukis et al., 2014). Besides, Burmann and Zeplin (2005) argued that the fit with the organization is precondition for brand commitment and this can only be achieved by providing employees with a clear understanding of the brand and such is provided through internal branding practices such as brand leadership, brand training and communication. And that brand commitment serve as a driver to employees to exhibit BCB. Hence, employee brand fit may be a possible reason why employees in an organization exhibit extra role behavior (BCB) (Boukis et al., 2017).

In addition, using equity theory Adams, (1963) it is assumed that individual evaluates their relationship with organization by comparing or balancing their inputs with the corresponding outputs from the organization. It is argued that individuals experience fit if they perceive balance between their inputs and outputs from the organization which serve as a motivation to engage in a behavior that may benefit the organization. Thus, as in this study inputs include (loyalty, commitment, and compliance with brand policy, abilities and skills) while outputs include (fair reward, required training, enough brand information, and appropriate brand leadership) if such is provided then the employee will be more willing to reciprocate by exhibiting BCB. Based on this premise, it is expected that employee brand fit could be a mechanism through which brand leadership, brand reward and brand training and brand communication significantly relates to brand

citizenship behavior. This is one of the empirical contributions the present study seeks to determine. Therefore, the present study posits that:

**Hypotheses 10:** Employee brand fit mediates the positive relationship between brand leadership and brand citizenship behavior.

**Hypotheses 11:** Employee brand fit mediates the positive relationship between brand reward and brand citizenship behavior.

**Hypotheses 12:** Employee brand fit mediates the positive relationship between brand training and brand citizenship behavior.

**Hypotheses 13:** Employee brand fit mediates the positive relationship between brand communication and brand citizenship behavior.

### **2.13 Theoretical Framework**

Exchange relationship between the employee and the organization and its representative is considered to have great impact on the employee's attitudes and behaviors (Wikhamn & Hall, 2012). In line with SET, providing employees with positive and beneficial actions contribute to the establishment of high-quality exchange relationships which create obligation for employees to reciprocate in positive and beneficial ways (Settoon et al., 1996). Therefore, some good mechanisms for which high-quality exchange relationships can be develop for employees is through internal branding practices (Chiang et al, 2013; Chang et al., 2012; Shaari et al., 2012). Thus, employee BCB can be

developed as a result of internal brand building which has significant impact on organizational survival.

Based on social exchange relationships, employees that perceived that their leaders have used appropriate brand leadership, perceived fair brand reward been provided, perceived adequate brand knowledge and skills are provided through internal brand communication and brand training employees would reciprocate by engaging in BCB. Nevertheless, the present study assumed that such depends on employee's fit with the organization. Hence, the study suggested employee brand fit to mediate the relationship between internal branding practices (brand leadership, brand reward, brand training and brand communication) and employee's BCB. The inclusion of employee brand fit in the relationship is basically on the crucial role it has in determining employee brand behavior which has impact on delivering brand promise to the customers (Boukis et al., 2014; 2017). In particular, employee brand fit was employed as a mediator based on arguments by Matanda and Ndubusi (2013) and Boukis et al. (2014) that it is an important mediating variable between internal branding and employee related brand outcomes such as brand-supporting behaviors (in-role and extra role) and intentions to stay. Furthermore, in line with equity theory, the study assume that where employee perceived balance between their inputs and the corresponding outputs from the organization, such would enhanced their brand fit which motivate them to engage in BCB.

Specifically, it is argued that brand-oriented organizations consider internal brand building as their main priority, therefore focused on their employee's needs and wants

which might influenced their fit with the organizations and eventually encourage BCB. In other words, providing employees with fair reward, using appropriate brand leadership, and providing adequate brand information and skills needed through brand communication and brand training serve as a motivation to develop brand fit and exhibit BCB. Hence, internal branding practices such as brand leadership, brand reward, brand training and brand communication are considered to have significant impact on employee brand fit and employee's BCB.

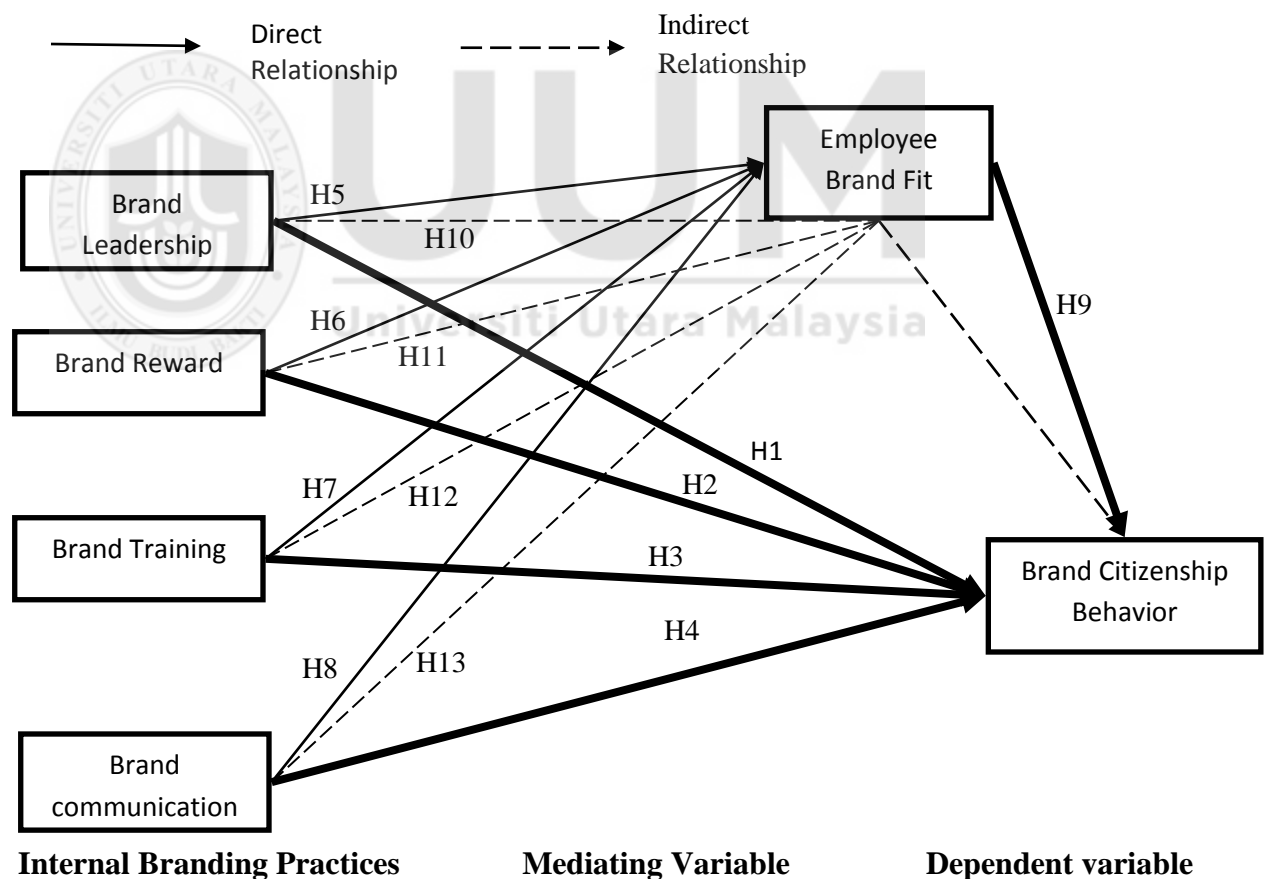


Figure 2.3  
Theoretical Framework

In sum, consistent with social exchange theory Blau (1964) and equity theory Adams (1963), the present model of internal branding practices (brand leadership, brand reward, brand training and brand communication) as stated in figure 2.3 is set to predict employee's BCB through the influence of employee brand fit.



## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The chapter discussed research methodology and procedures employed in the study. Specifically, discussed research design, operationalization of variables, population of the study, sample size and sampling technique, data collection and data analysis techniques were discussed in the chapter.

#### **3.2 Research Philosophy**

Research philosophy is mainly concern on how researchers view the world or the basic beliefs that guides an investigation. Therefore, different researchers have different ideas about how things exist (Sekaran & bougie, 2013). Basically, there are two main paradigms; the positivist and the inter-pretist approach (Bryaman & Bell, 2007).

Positivist assumed that there is an objective truth, as such reality exist across individuals that we are able to predict and control (Sekeran & Bougie, 2013). Furthermore, this paradigm consider social phenomenon as an entity that need to be treated as such. This suggest that the researcher is required to be independent of the research, hence the need to employ some techniques that maximizes objectivity and minimizes the influence of the researcher in the research process. In addition, positivist consider deductive reasoning as a tool used in testing theories that reflect cause and effect relationship between constructs that are developed from theories or empirical facts and generalization is obtainable

(Sekaran and Bougie, 2013; Cresswell, 2003). They also assumed that social science phenomenon can be quantitatively presented through correlation to determine relationships between constructs.

Interpretivist on the other hand assumed that social reality is subjective and socially designed which both researcher and the respondents interact to understand a problem from self-perspective (Cresswell, 2003). The interpretivist also argued that social science research can be qualitatively done through direct observation, case study, or interview (Cresswell, 2003). Nevertheless, in line with these arguments by both paradigms, the underpinning philosophy for this study is positivism as the study is a quantitative in nature as it used empirical methods and empirical statements. Quantitative research is a type of research where phenomenon are explained by collecting and analyzing numerical data using statistical tools (Cresswell, 2003). Hence, this study used measurement to understand relationships between internal branding practices, employee brand fit and employee BCB. Besides, the present study is consistent with the requirements of quantitative research where social reality is objectively determined using rigid guides in the process of data collection and analysis (Cresswell, 2003).

### **3.3 Research Design**

Having identified the research questions and the objectives in line with the research problems, and the research hypotheses, the next is to design a research in such a way that enables the collection and analyzing data to test the predetermined hypotheses empirically. A research design is viewed as the method or a master plan of gathering and

analyzing data based on research questions in order to arrive at a solution in a particular study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). Therefore, collecting and analyzing data in line with developed research questions based on the problem statement requires an appropriate research design.

In this regard, this study utilized a quantitative method in order to explore the connection between internal branding practice (brand leadership, brand reward brand training and brand communication) and employee BCB as well as the mediating effect of employee brand fit. In particular, quantitative method is employed because the aim of this study is hypothesis testing/causal research, which was designed to investigate the impact of the exogenous variables on the dependent variable, in addition to the mediating role that may likely enhance such relationship. According to Sekaran & Bougie (2010) studies that mostly involved hypothesis testing often describe the nature of certain relationships and or provide the differences between groups and the differences between two or more factors in a particular situation.

In particular, causal research is viewed as a study in which the purpose is to delineate one or more factors that are causing one another (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). In essence, the intention of the researcher conducting a causal research is to explain that variable X cause variable Y. As such, this study is generally assumed to be quantitative research in nature. Similarly, quantitative method is a measurement where numbers are used to present the phenomenon being studied (Hair Jr. et al., 2010). In other words, quantitative research



involves the use application of statistical analysis techniques to quantifies and interpret data (Bhatti, Hee, & Sundram, 2012).

Furthermore, it is important to choose the most suitable method for this study from among the available research methods/strategies such as survey, experiment and interview. The study adapted a survey method to obtain data using self-administered questionnaires. Survey method is adapted in order to enable the researcher to collect quantitative data and analyze the data using descriptive and inferential statistics (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). Fisher (2010) argued that survey research design is used where the study involves assessing thoughts, feelings, and opinions about a particular situation by collecting primary data from respondents. Specifically, survey method is viewed as a system of collecting specific information from respondent to describe, compare and explain their knowledge, attitudes, and behavior (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013).

According to Zikmund, Babin, Carr, and Griffin (2013) survey research design is used for the purpose of collecting primary data. Furthermore, they argued that survey research provides a fast, efficient, and inexpensive means to assess information needed from a given population. Similarly, in terms of collecting data from a large sample, survey research was used as using questionnaire is less expensive compared to observation, secondary data, and interview. Zikmund et al. (2013) opined that in an interview, responses from the respondents may be influenced by the nature and characteristics of the interviewer. On the other hand observation may not be appropriate for this kind of study as it may not give a better understanding of respondent's behavior particularly where they

know that they are being observed. Therefore, survey research using a questionnaire as an instrument for data collection is believed to be appropriate for the proposed study.

According to Creswell (2003) survey research consists of cross-sectional and longitudinal studies that involve the use of questionnaires or structured interview in order to obtain data. Cross-sectional research is a one-shot study where data is collected just once upon a time, while a longitudinal study is a study where data is collected for two or more times (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). This study utilized a cross-sectional study to obtain data using self-administered questionnaire as discussed earlier. According to Kumar, (2005) this type of design is useful as it gives an overall ‘picture’ of a study, and is usually simple in design. Similarly, cross-sectional research is chosen because of the period of the study as the period of the study might not be sufficient for longitudinal research. In addition, cross-sectional research is found to be appropriate because of the amount of effort and costs involved in obtaining data from respondents over a period of time (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). Therefore, this necessitates the present study to employ cross-sectional survey.

### **3.4 Population and Sample**

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010), a population consists of the entire group of people, events and things of concern that a particular researcher wishes to examine with the use of its subset referred as a sample. The authors further assert that a population of a particular study comprises of people, events, and thing of interest of a researcher which he or she wants to make inferences based on a derived sample.

The present study is focused on the Nigeria telecommunication sector. The telecommunication sector is chosen because it is one of the most vibrant service sectors in the country. Therefore, it is the best platform to test the model of this study. Specifically, the sector is faced with high competition among the operators; therefore, their employees are required to exhibit BCB in order to attain differentiation. In addition, to achieve competitive advantage, telecommunication companies require maintaining a long-term relationship with their customers. As such, to ensure brand success employee's willingness to exhibit positive brand behavior in particular BCB becomes very much crucial. This is because, during service encounter employee's behaviors and attitudes are crucial to the customer's evaluation of brand. Thus, their satisfaction and attitude toward brand depend largely on employee's behavior and attitude (Morhart et al., 2009). Equally, exhibiting BCB is crucial to the brand as it has impact on intention to stay, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Bravo et al., 2017; Burmann & Zeplin, 2005; Burmann et al., 2009; King & Grace, 2012; Morhart et al., 2009).

The study was conducted on individual employees of the telecommunication sector in Kano state north-west part of the country. Specifically, the Kano state is chosen because it has the highest number of customers in the Northern part of Nigeria, with almost 8 million subscribers (NBS , 2016). Therefore, the population comprises of all employees working with GSM operators namely MTN, Globacom, Airtel, and Etisalat and fixed telephony operators which include Vodafone and Multilinks operating within Kano State Nigeria. The six operators have a total population of 721 employees both frontline and back stage in the state. Specifically, the population includes 208 employees from MTN,

137 from Globacom, 133 from Airtel and 123 from Etisalat, Multilinks 50 and Vodafone 70 (NCC, 2016).

In particular, front line and back stage employees of the organization will be considered in the present study. Employees are choosing because of their impact on the success of the brand. According to King and Grace (2010) argued that employees play an important role in brand building. Therefore, collective goals of the organization can be achieved through effective internal brand management practice.

#### **3.4.1 Sample Size**

A sample is viewed as a subset of the population which consists of individuals selected from a larger population for the purpose of a study (Sekaran and Bougie, 2010). Therefore, in a survey research, it is difficult to cover the entire population; hence, there is the need to have an optimal sample in order to minimize the cost of sampling error. In particular, Salkind (1997) emphasized the need to have an appropriate sample size as a small sample may not represent the population. Therefore, small sample results in Type I error, hence, leading to rejection of a particular result when it is supposed to be accepted (Sekaran, 2003). The author further opined that too large sample is also not suitable as it may lead to type II error, which is accepting a result that is supposed to be rejected.

In order to arrive at correct sample size in order to ensure accuracy in determining the representative for the current study, consider both Dillman (2007) and Krejcie and

Morgan (1970) guideline. Therefore, based on the given population size of 721, the sample size was computed using the formula below:

$$N_s = \frac{(NP)(P)(1 - P)}{(NP - 1) \left(\frac{B}{C}\right)^2 + (P)(1 - P)}$$

Where,

$N_s$  = sample size

$N_p$  = Size of the population 721

$p$  = the population proportion expected to answer a certain way (0.5 or 50% is most conservative)

$B$  = acceptable level of sampling error (0.05 or 5%)

$C$  = Z statistic associated with confidence level of interval (0.05 is 1.96)

Moreover, in the present study, the chances of respondents to participate are not known. It is assumed that 50/50 chance is more justifiable/acceptable than 80/20 for a more homogenous sample (Dillman, 2007). As such, in this study, the population proportion is assumed to be 0.5,  $B$  which is considered as the sampling error of the study, can be set at 0.05 that is about +5% of the actual population. In addition,  $C = Z$  statistic, that is associated with a confidence level of 1.96 which corresponds to 95% level of significance. Therefore, the sample size is calculated as follows:

$$N_s = \frac{(721)(0.5)(1 - 0.5)}{(721 - 1) \left(\frac{0.05}{1.96}\right)^2 + (0.5)(1 - 0.5)}$$

$$N_s = \frac{150.25}{720 * 0.000651 + 0.25}$$

$$N_s = \frac{180.25}{0.718}$$

$$N_s = 251$$

Based on the above calculation, the sample size in this study is two hundred and fifty one (251) at the sample frame of +5% margin errors. It can also be determined using Krejcie and Morgan's scientific guideline (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). From the table, the sample size of 700 to 750 population fall between the ranges of 248 to 254. Thus, the study consider the calculated sample size of 251 based on Dillman (2007) formula. Hence, the sample in this study is considered to be appropriate, based on the suggestion of Hill (1998) that sample for most research shall be between 30 and 500. In the same line, Sekaran and Bougie (2013) argued that a sample size of 30 and 500 is most suitable for social science research.

Nevertheless, due to nature of low response rate in a survey research, it is important for the researcher to take measures to lessen non-response rate as much as possible, which may render a research invalid (Groves, 2006). Hence, to reduce the non-response rate, the study followed the suggestions made by Salkind (1997) to adjust the sample size. It was suggested that sample size could be increased by 40% to 50% in order to avoid the challenge of uncooperative respondents and loss of questionnaires.

Hence, 50 percent of the study sample size of is 126, where the original sample size is 251. Therefore, the new sample size in this study was 377 that have been drawn from the population. However, based on this, 377 survey instruments were given out to the randomly sampled employees of telecommunication companies. Although, survey research may not be without possible refusal by respondents to participate in the study, such an increase in the sample size has lessened the size of non-response rate. The table below gives the proportionate sample size for each operator.

Table 3.1  
*Sample Frame*

<b>Operators</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Proportionate Sample for each Organization</b>
MTN	208	108
GLOBACOM	137	71
ETISLAT	123	64
AIRTEL	133	69
MULTILINKS	50	27
VODAFONE	70	37
TOTAL	721	377

### **3.4.2 Unit of Analysis/Respondents**

As mentioned earlier in the previous section, the study proposed employees as respondents. The study aimed at examining the influence of internal branding practices on employees brand citizenship behavior. Employees are considered because they are the brand deliverers, and to deliver the brand promise in a consistent manner , thus, they need to exhibit brand-consistent behavior specifically BCB (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007). In

particular, frontline and backstage employees are considered based on the fact that all employees are argued to play an important role in the success of the brand (Burmam & Zeplin, 2005; Shaari et al., 2011; 2012).

### **3.4.3 Sampling Technique**

Sampling is seen as the process a researcher follows to select an adequate number of subjects from a given population (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). Basically, sampling design consists of probability and non-probability sampling (Sekaran & Bougie 2010). All elements in probability sampling have an equal chance of being included as subjects of a specified population. Meanwhile, non-probability sampling elements in the population have no chance of being included as sampling subjects. According to Sekaran and Bougie (2013) probability sampling is commonly used once the representativeness is considered important for a wider generalization. Meanwhile, non-probability can be more appropriate when time and or other factors are considered than generalization.

In the present study, probability sampling technique was used or employed to determine the subjects that would be selected out of the population elements. This is due to the fact that the present study is of importance in the interest of wider generalizability to adhere to contributing to the body of knowledge. In addition, the study utilizes this technique because it provides individuals an equal chance of being included as a sample object (Sekaran, 2003). Therefore, one major benefit of this technique is that there is no bias of the researcher against the choice of sample objects (Salkind, 1997). Nevertheless, there are two major types of probability sampling the unrestricted also known as simple



random sampling and the restricted or complex probability sampling (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). Hence, in this study, simple random sampling was used. Simple random sampling is a sampling procedure where each element of a population has equal chance of being included in the sample. In particular, the choice of this technique is based on the fact that it has a least bias and offers the most generalizability as each and every element can be included in the sample (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013).

Therefore, with a population of seven hundred and twenty one (721) employees, out of which three hundred and seventy seven (377) were selected as sample size, the probability of every employee is equal to any other in the population as each employee has equal chance of being included in the study. Besides, the common procedure used to determine simple random selection from a population is the use of spreadsheet (MS-excel) computer application to generate random numbers of the sample size from the population (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). Hence, using excel function formula =randbetween(min number,max number) random numbers were generated to enable the selection of the sample from the population.

### **3.5 Data Collection Procedures**

As earlier stated in the previous section, this study used self-administered questionnaire to obtain data from respondents. Self-administered questionnaire is a kind of questionnaire where by the respondents are responsible to read and answer the questions in either the presence or not of a questioner (Zikmund et al., 2013).

The distribution and collection of data began two months after the successful proposal defense. The exercise lasted for more than two months, specifically from 19<sup>th</sup> of December 2016 to the 10<sup>th</sup> of March 2017. Prior to the data collection, an official introduction letter was obtained from Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business (OYAGBS), which serve to introduce the researcher and the main purpose of the study. The letter has helped the researcher to prove to the managers and respondents to the fact that the study is basically for academic purpose in order to builds confidence and trust in their mind. The managers of the participated organizations directed their personnel officer to assist alongside with the researcher and two other research assistant in the distribution and collection of questionnaires from the employees. The questionnaires were distributed to respondents by the officer after receiving detailed explanation on how to randomly distribute the questionnaires from the researcher. Specifically, the officers from the various organizations were asked to distribute the questionnaires to the randomly selected respondents which were generated from Microsoft excel.

The survey was divided into two parts. The first part consists of all questionnaires collected within the period from December 19<sup>th</sup> 2016 to 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2017 and was considered as early respondents. In particular, 111 usable questionnaires were obtained from the respondent within the early period. Considering the time taken, a follow-up and phone call were used as a reminder to the respondents. Hence, this effort yields a good result and 143 usable questionnaires were collected. Similarly, these questionnaires were

obtained within the period from 4<sup>th</sup> February to 10<sup>th</sup> March 2017, and are considered as late respondents.

### **3.6 Operationalization of Variables**

Operationalization of variables involves defining the measures of variables used in a study, and in what way it will be measured (Hair Jr., Black, & Anderson, 2010). Hence, this section contains the definition of the variables and the selection of items for each variable.

#### **3.6.1 Operationalization of Brand Citizenship Behavior**

Employee's BCB in this study is operationally defined as employee's behavior exhibited on a voluntary basis to project a number of generic behaviors that enhance the brand identity. In the present study brand citizenship behavior will be measured as a multi-dimensional consisting of four dimensions as suggested by Shaari et al., (2012). These include: 1. Helping behavior is viewed to as the extent to which employees have positive attitude, friendliness, and helpfulness toward colleagues and customers of the brand. 2. Sportsmanship is associated with employees' engagement with the brand without complaining even if such may cause inconvenience and also willing to be involved for the brand at a great cost. 3. Brand endorsement refers to the extent to which the employee recommends the brand to others in a non-job-related situation such as to a friend; passing on brand identity to newcomers in the organization. 4. Self-development refers to employee's willingness to continuously enhance brand-related skills.

### **3.6.2 Internal Branding**

The definition of internal branding is in line with MacLavery et al., (2007) as a set of strategic processes that align and empower employees to deliver the appropriate customer experience in a consistent fashion. The processes comprise of brand leadership, brand reward, brand training, and brand communication.

#### **3.6.2.1 Operationalization of Brand Leadership**

In this study, brand leadership is operationally defined as the approach or style a leader used to motivate his or her followers (employees) to engage or exhibit brand consistent behavior (BCB) in order to achieve organization's brand goal. The study measures brand leadership based on two styles or approaches, namely, transformational and transactional brand leadership style as argued by Morhart et al., (2009) to have an impact on brand-building behavior. hence, the study adapts 30 measurement items provided by Morhart et al., (2009). Transformational brand leadership is viewed as the leader's approach/method to motivate his/her followers/subordinates to act on behalf of the brand by appealing to their values and personal conviction. In contrast transactional brand leadership is considered as leader's approach/method to motivate his/her followers to act on behalf of the brand by stressing to a contingency rationale in followers' minds.

#### **3.6.2.2 Operationalization of Brand Reward**

In this study, brand reward is operationally defined as the extent to which employee in an organization is rewarded and recognized for engaging in brand consistent behavior in order to achieve organization's brand goal. The study adapts the measurement developed

by Shaari et al., (2012) consisting of both monetary and non-monetary incentives which organizations used on their employees to encourage the brand-consistency behavior. Therefore, the study measures brand rewards as a one-dimension construct.

#### **3.6.2.3 Operationalization Brand Training**

In the present study brand training is operationally defined as the systematic and planned effort by an organization to develop and provide employees with brand related understanding (knowledge) and skills needed to enhance his or her brand-consistent behavior in order to achieve brand goals. The variable will be operationalized as one-dimension construct measured with 4 items adapted from Chang et al. (2012).

#### **3.6.2.4 Operationalization of Brand Communication**

In the present study, brand communication is operationally defined as a process or method organization follows to provide employees with brand knowledge in order to enhance their brand-consistent behavior. The variable will be operationalized as a one-dimension construct with 5 items adapted from Chiang et al. (2013).

#### **3.6.3 Operationalization of Employee Brand Fit**

In the present study employee brand fit is operationally defined as the compatibility between individual employee and the organization that occurs when at least one entity provides what the other needs or they share similar values or both. The variable will be operationalized as a one-dimension construct with 4 items adapted from (Boukis & Gounaris, 2014).

### **3.7 Measurement of Variables/Instrumentation**

This section is focused on the instruments and measurement items adapted from previous studies in order to measure the variables in the study's model. Questionnaires were administered to the samples who are employees in the present study. Specifically, questionnaires were employed in the study because it is more efficient data collection mechanism, less expensive, and time-consuming than observation and interview (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). The questionnaire was divided into sections and, each section represents a construct measure, (i.e. sections A, B, C, D, E, F, and G) as shown in Appendix A. As shown in the research framework, the present study has six major constructs, namely, brand leadership, brand reward, brand training, brand communication, employee brand fit and employee brand citizenship behavior (BCB).

#### **3.7.1 Measurement Scale**

Basically there are 4 types of scale, namely, nominal, interval, ratio, and ordinal. A scale is a mechanism through which respondents are categorized based on how they differ from each other on the variables of interest in a particular study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). Hence, in this study, nominal scale was used to obtain demographic information of the respondents. Sekaran and Bougie (2010) posited that this type of scale is suitable for measuring individual characteristics and other factors, therefore the study adopts this scale to measure the demographic information of respondents. Moreover, to measure the feelings, perception, and opinion of individuals the interval scale was found to be useful in the study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). Based on this the study adopted the interval scale

to measure employees perception and experience of internal branding practices, employee brand fit and brand citizenship behavior.

### **3.7.2 Scaling Design**

Scaling is a procedure of assigning numbers to a specific opinion, attitude or perception in a study (Kothari, 2004). In the present study, the Likert scale was adopted due to the nature of respondents and the information needed from them (Alreck & Settle, 1995). A seven-point Likert scale was found to be suitable as argued by Krosnick and Fabrigar(1997) that a scale between five and seven is more reliable than lower or higher scales. Similarly, Sauro (2010) opined that a seven-point Likert scale is better than 5-point Likert scale. Likert scale (1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Somewhat disagree; 4 = Neither agree or disagree (neutral); 5 = Somewhat agree; 6 = Agree; 7 = Strongly agree) was used to obtain information on section B - G of the questionnaire. Section A of the questionnaire employs a dichotomous scale which was used to collect information with regards to the respondents' demographic background. Sekaran and Bougie (2010) argued that this type of scale is used to elicit Yes or No answer from each individual respondent.

### **3.7.3 Measurement Items**

In this study, to answer the research questions and to test the hypotheses, measurement items were adapted to measure the dependent, independent, and mediating variables. In particular, items were adapted from earlier studies that are relevant to the present research context. Specifically, the research model comprised of six constructs namely brand

citizenship behavior, brand leadership, brand reward, brand training, brand communication, and employee brand fit. Likert scale was adopted for all the items, therefore respondents were requested to indicate their answers to each question on a seven-point scale.

### 3.7.3.1 Survey Items Related to Brand Citizenship Behavior.

In order to measure brand citizenship behavior, 18 items were used as adapted from (Burmam et al., 2009; Shaari et al., 2012). The items covered all the four dimensions of employee's BCB, namely, helping behavior, sportsmanship, brand endorsement, and self-development. All items were measured using a seven-point Likert scale (strongly disagree; disagree; somewhat disagree; neither agree nor disagree (Neutral); somewhat agree; agree; strongly agree).

Table 3.2  
*Items related to Brand Citizenship Behavior*

1.	My attitude towards customers and colleagues is positive
2.	I am always friendly to organization's customers and other colleagues.
3.	I always help customers and colleagues.
4.	I always put myself in the position of customers in order to know their views and problems.
5.	I always take responsibility even outside my own area of competency if necessary.
6.	I always consider the consequences of what I say and act on the organization's brand image.
7.	I act in accordance with the brand identity even when I'm not controlled by anyone.
8.	I take special care of my work and quality of my work outcome, if it has a positive impact on organization's brand identity.



Table 3.2 (Continued)

9.	I complain frequently on the effort that is made to generate positive brand image.
10	I express frequently the difficulties and annoying roles and responsibilities of my jobs.
11.	I am ready to stay with this organization, even if better offer (more salary) comes from other competitors.
12.	I would always recommend this brand to others (friends, acquaintances, and relatives) also in private conversations.
13.	I would try to convey our brand identity to new employees (e.g. either in informal conversation or through assuming a mentor role.
14.	In order to satisfy the customer's expectations towards organization's brand....
a.	I ask my other co-workers actively for feedback
b.	I work hard to develop expertise by reading professional journals, manuals and other related guidebooks.
c.	I always report customers complain or internal problems directly to person concern.
d.	I take initiative regularly to participate in training.
e.	I take initiatives to come up with new ideas for new products, services and process improvement.

### 3.7.3.2 Survey Items Related to Brand Leadership

In order to measure brand leadership, 30 items were used as adapted from Morhart et al. (2009). Specifically, the items include the two dimensions of brand leadership, namely, transformational brand leadership and transactional brand leadership. Therefore, there are 20 items measuring transformational brand leadership and 10 items measuring transactional brand leadership. All items were measured using seven-point Likert scale (strongly disagree; disagree; somewhat disagree; neither agree nor disagree (Neutral); somewhat agree; agree; strongly agree).

Table 3.3

*Items related to brand leadership*

My leader will.....

1. Re-examine the brand promise and question whether is delivered appropriate.
2. Asks for different perspectives when interpreting the organization's brand values.
3. Get me to look at my job in terms of a branding task.
4. Recommend a brand promoter's perspective on how to accomplish a brand task.
5. Talk optimistically on the future of our organization's brand.
6. Talk enthusiastically on what is needed to accomplish in order to strengthen our organization's brand.
7. Articulate a compelling vision of our brand.
8. Express believe that brand organization's brand goals will be achieved.
9. Instill pride in me for being associated with organization's brand.
10. Goes beyond self-interest for the benefit of the organization's brand.
11. Lives our organization's brand in a way that builds my respect.
12. Show a sense of power and confidence while talking about the organization's brand.
13. Specify the significance of having a strong sense of our organization's brand.
14. Stress on the organization's most important brand values and his/her belief in them.
15. Considers both moral and ethical consequences of our brand promise.
16. Stress on the importance of having a collective sense of our brand mission.
17. Spend time on teaching and coaching me brand related issues.
18. Treat me as an individual rather than just one of many members of the organization.
19. Consider me as having different aspiration, abilities and needs from other members of the organization.
20. Help me to develop myself in order to be a good representative of our brand.
21. Focuses attention on mistakes, deviations, exceptions and irregularities from what I am expected to do as a representative of the brand.

Table 3.3 (Continued)

My leader will.....

- |     |   |
|-----|---|
| 22. | Keep careful track of mistakes regarding brand-consistency of my behavior.  |
| 23. | Monitor my performance as a brand representative for errors that require correction.                                  |
| 24. | Be on alert in case of failure to meet standards for brand-consistence behavior.                                      |
| 25. | Reprimand me where my performance is not up to standards for brand-consistent behavior.                               |
| 26. | React accordingly if I do not adhere to our standards for brand-consistent behavior.                                  |
| 27. | Tell me what I will receive if I do as required from a brand representative.  |
| 28. | Tell me what I should do to be rewarded for my efforts for brand-consistent behavior.                                 |
| 29. | Spells out agreement with me on what to receive if I behave in line with our standards for brand-consistent behavior. |
| 30. | Talks about special rewards for ideal behavior as a brand representative.   |

### 3.7.3.3 Survey Items related to Brand Rewards.

In order to measure brand rewards 5 items were used as adapted from Shaari et al. (2012).

In the study, brand reward was measured as a one-dimension construct. All items were measured using seven-point Likert scale (strongly disagree; disagree; somewhat disagree; neither agree nor disagree (Neutral); somewhat agree; agree; strongly agree).

Table 3.4

*Items related to Brand Rewards*


---

1	My organization provides better incentives and rewards at all levels for service quality delivery, not just productivity.
2	My organization gives freedom and authority to individual employee to act independently for delivery of brand promise.
3	How much I champion the organization's brand depends on how much I am rewarded.
4	My organization provides training to employees that enhance their ability to deliver the brand promise.
5	Promotions in this organization depend on whether the employee behaves in accordance with brand identity and enhance brand image

---

**3.7.3.4 Survey Items related to Brand Training.**

To measure brand training 4 items were used as adapted from Chang et al.(2012). All questions were asked on seven-point Likert scale (Strongly disagrees, Disagree, Somewhat disagree, either agree or disagree (Neutral), somewhat agree, Agree, strongly agree).

Table 3.5

*Items Related to Brand Training*


---

1.	My organization makes employees understanding brand-related values and spirit through training.
2.	My organization through training courses makes individual employee values and behaviors consistent with the values of the brand.
3.	My organization through training provides the employees with skills to make them produce positive brand-consistent behavior.
4.	My organization encourages me to come up with the new and better suggestions on how to do things.

---

### 3.7.3.5 Survey Items Related to Brand Communication

To measure brand communication, 5 items were used as adapted from Chiang et al. (2013). Items were measured using seven-point Likert scale (strongly disagree; Disagree; somewhat disagree; neither agree nor disagree (Neutral); somewhat agree; agree; strongly agree).

Table 3.6

*Items Related to Brand Communication*

1	My organization communicates to us brand-related spirits, content, and values while developing new products.
2	My organization do transmits brand values to employees through various kinds of informal channels.
3	My organization do transmits brand values to employees through various kinds of formal channels.
4	My organization often transmits brand values toward stakeholders through interaction of employees and stakeholders such as customers and suppliers.
5	My organization regularly assesses the impact of brand communication.

### 3.7.3.6 Survey Items related to Employee Brand Fit

To measure employee brandfit, 4 items were used as adapted from Boukis et al., (2014). All questions were on seven-point Likert scale (Strongly disagrees, Disagree, Somewhat disagree, either agree or disagree (Neutral), somewhat agree, Agree, strongly agree).

Table 3.7

*Items related to Employee Brand Fit*

1	I feel that my personal values are a good fit with this organization.
2	My organization has the same values as I do with regard to concern to others.
3	My organization has the same values as I do with regard to honesty.
4	My organization has the same values as I do with regard to fairness.

*Table 3.8 Summary of the Variables and the Measurement of the Instrument*

No.	Variable	Operational Definition	Dimension	No. of Items	Source
1	Brand citizenship Behavior	Employee's behavior exhibited on voluntary basis to project number of generic behaviors that enhance brand identity.	Helping behavior Sportsmanship Brand endorsement Self-development	8 2 3 5	Shaari et al., (2012) and Burmann et al., (2009).
2	Brand Leadership	The approach or style a leader used to motivate his or her followers (employees) to engage or exhibit brand consistent behavior (BCB).	Transformational brand leadership Transactional brand leadership	20 10	Morhart et al., (2009)
3	Brand Reward	The extent to which employee in an organization is rewarded and recognized for engaging in brand-consistent behavior.		5	Shaari et al., (2012)

Table 3.8 (Continued)

No.	Variable	Operational Definition	Dimension	No. of Items	Source
4	Brand Training	The systematic and planned effort by organization to develop and provide employees with brand related understanding (knowledge) and skills needed to enhance his or her brand-consistent behavior (BCB).		4	Chang et al. (2012)
5	Brand Communication	Process or method organization follows to provide employees with brand knowledge in order to enhance their brand-consistent behavior (BCB).		5	Chiang et al. (2013)
6	Employee Brand Fit	The compatibility between individual and the organization or brand that occurs when at least one entity provides what the other needs or they share similar values or both.		4	Boukis et al., (2014)

### 3.8 Reliability and Validity

Validity and reliability are primarily concerned with the goodness of items measuring a particular construct. It is important for researchers to ensure that the measures developed

are reasonably good, and can be achieved through both validity and reliability tests (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). However, while reliability assess the degree to which the measures are free from random error and yield consistent results, the validity assesses the degree to which measures in a particular study measure what it is expected to measure (Kothari, 2004).

### **3.8.1 Validity**

Validity is viewed as the extent of how well an instrument that is developed measures a particular variable/construct it is expected to measure (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). There are many approaches to establishing validity. These include face validity, construct validity, content validity, and criterion validity. Specifically, to assess the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was subjected to face validity, content validity, and construct validity.

Face validity was used to ensure that items selected to measure a particular construct measure it efficiently (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). This was achieved through expert opinions. For the present study, the researcher obtained the views of academicians and professionals from the industry in order to ensure clarity, understanding and ability of the items in the questionnaire in representing the domain of the study. Similarly, content validity was used to ensure the adequacy and the representativeness of the elements in measuring the construct (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010; Kothari, 2004). The study has sought expert opinions concerning the adequacy, suitability, content, and arrangement of items designed to measure a construct in order to achieve content validity (Sekaran & Bougie,



2010). Therefore, a draft of the questionnaire was distributed to academics and professionals for their expert advice on the clarity and adequacy of the questionnaire items.

In addition, construct validity was established to assess how well the outcomes/results obtained from the use of a measure actually assess a designed concept (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). Meanwhile, construct validity is concerned with making sure that items are measuring what the study has been operationalized to measure. In order to assess construct validity in the present study, both convergent and discriminant validity were ascertained (Hair et al., 2014). Hence, the present study ascertained the construct validity using both correlation analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. In particular, average variance extracted (AVE) was employed to assess the convergent validity and both Fornell and Lacker criterion and cross-loadings were used to evaluate discriminant validity (Hair Jr, Sarstedt, Hopkins, & Kuppelwieser, 2014).

### **3.8.2 Reliability**

Reliability is basically concerned with the extent to which a specific item adapted in a research will give the same results on a different occasion (Greener, 2008). In other words, reliability measures how stable and consistent adapted measurement in measuring the concept (Hair et al., 2010). Thus, as in many studies, Cronbach alpha was used in the pilot study and composite reliability in the main analysis which was used to ascertain the internal consistency of the measurement adapted in the present study.

### 3.9 Pilot Study

Pilot test is a small-scale research project, which is aimed at collecting data from a small group of respondents similar to those to be used in the main study. The aim of conducting a pilot study is mostly to establish the validity and reliability of the developed or adapted measures (Zikmund et al., 2013). In this study, a pilot study was done to ensure validity and reliability of the survey instrument before proceeding to main data collection in the study. Thus, for the purpose of the pilot study, 40 useable questionnaires have been gathered from randomly selected employees of telecommunication which composed the elements of the population of the present study. However, those that participated in the pilot study were not included in the main study. Based on the pilot study conducted, items in the questionnaires were reworded to provide more understanding to the respondents. In addition, reliability test was conducted in order to assess the internal consistency of the items. For the purpose of the pilot study, Cronbach's alpha was used to ascertain the reliability of the items. Therefore, as it is illustrated in Table 3.9 below, the Cronbach's alpha is above the 0.70 as proposed by Hair et al., (2014).

Table 3.9  
*Pilot Test: Reliability Results*

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Cronbach Alpha</b>
BCB	0.878
BL	0.927
BR	0.837
BT	0.737
BC	0.851
BF	0.823

Note: BCB= brand citizenship behavior; BL= brand leadership; BR= brand reward; BT= brand training; BC= brand communication; BF= brand fit.

### **3.10 Data Analysis Technique.**

After the collection of adequate and valid data, the subsequent action is to prepare for data analysis. The present study used Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 18 in order to code, screen, and other preliminary analyses. However, for the main analysis, the present study used partial least squares (PLS) path modeling using smartPLS 3.0 statistical software. This technique was employed because PLS path modeling is more appropriate for real-world application and more useful when models are complex (Hair et al., 2014). The researchers further argued that the technique is also more suitable for social science studies where most data are inclined to have normality problem. Hence, PLS does not necessarily necessitate data to be normal. Therefore, the study selected this technique in order to avoid any normality problem that may arise in the course of data analysis.

Similarly, SEM is also regarded to be among the most powerful statistical tools particularly in social sciences that can test many relationships simultaneously (Tabachnick & Fidel 2007). Additionally, the technique was employed as it is superior in assessing mediation (Preacher & Hayes, 2004). PLS-SEM has been viewed by Chin (1998) to take into account for measurement error and provide more accurate mediating effects. In addition, the present study used PLS as it can work efficiently with constructs with fewer items (e. g, one or two) (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011).

In addition, in comparison to SPSS regression analysis modeling, PLS has the benefit of estimating the structural model and measurement model concurrently although both techniques produce same results (Chin, Marcolin, & Newted, 1996; Gerlach, Kowalski, & Wold, 1979). Furthermore, compare to covariance-based structural equation modeling applications, for example. AMOS, PLS-SEM is considered more appropriate because it is more suitable for prediction, theory extension, or developing existing theory (Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics, 2009; Hulland, 1999). As such, because of these reasons stated the present study used the technique to analyze the data obtained from respondents.

Nonetheless, in order to have a valid and clean data, the present study follows the stages of data analysis. In the first place, after coding, the data were screened and cleaned by testing response bias, detecting and replacing missing value, and also testing and treating outliers. Secondly, validity and reliability were assessed using PLS algorithm (measurement model assessment). In particular, individual items reliabilities i.e indicator reliability and internal consistency using composite reliability (CR) was assessed. In line with Hair et al. (2014) indicators with lower loadings below 0.40 were deleted and items with loadings 0.4 to 0.70 were deleted in order to achieve average variance extracted AVE or CR. Following Hair et al. (2014) a threshold of 0.70 was used to ascertain the CR of all the constructs in the study. Additionally, convergent validity was assessed using AVE and in line with Hair et al. (2014) a threshold of 0.50 for all the constructs was used. Equally, discriminant validity was assessed using Fornell and Lacker criterion (1981) and outer loadings of the indicators. Hence, PLS algorithm was performed in order to ascertain the validity and reliability of the constructs.

Furthermore, the structural model was assessed using PLS bootstrapping process with 5000 samples (Henseler et al., 2009; Hair et al., 2014). Subsequently, the study interpreted the result in the form of beta value, R square value, effect size, and also the predictive relevance of the model to assess the fitness of the model (Hair et al., 2014). Lastly, the mediation analysis was conducted using bootstrapping indirect effect. Specifically, the study follow the suggestion of Hayes (2009) to test the mediation effect of employee brand fit. As such, the first condition of Baron and Kenny (1986) was not considered as mediation can hold even if the direct effect between the independent variable and the dependent variable is not significant (Preacher and Hayes 2009). Hence, mediation can occur if the indirect is significant, that is the significant impact of IV on the DV through the mediating variable.

### **3.11 Summary of the Chapter**

In this chapter, explanation with regards to relationship between the variables in the theoretical framework, hypotheses development and the operationalization of the constructs/variables were discussed. Furthermore, the chapter stated and justified the type of research design selected for the study. Additionally, the researcher discussed the population, sample size, sampling procedures of selecting sample size so as to have representation of the whole population elements. The chapter also explain in detail the survey instrument and data collection procedure were presented. Similarly, the chapter highlights the reasons and result of pilot study. Finally, data analysis techniques (PLS-SEM) for the main study as well as the preliminary data analysis (SPSS V 18) were highlighted in the chapter.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The chapter contained the empirical results obtained using PLS-SEM path modeling. Before the presentation of the main results, the researcher performs and presents the preliminary/data screening analysis. As such, data screening, analysis of missing values, treatment of outliers, as well as descriptive statistics was performed. The chapter discusses the response rate from the field. The chapter also contains the analysis of the measurement model through construct validity and reliability analysis of the measures, using PLS-SEM approach. Furthermore, based on the data collected from the questionnaires, structural model relationships between the four independent or exogenous constructs of internal branding practices and two endogenous constructs of employee brand fit and employee brand citizenship are analyzed in the chapter.

#### **4.2 Response Rate**

A total of 282 respondents sourced from six telecommunication companies in Kano State, Nigeria have filled and returned the distributed questionnaires. The companies include MTN, GLO, Etisalat, Airtel, Vodafone, and Multilinks. Therefore, as shown in the Table 4.1, a total of 254 questionnaires were lastly retained as useable for further analysis out of the total 282 that were obtained from respondents. In particular, a total of 28 responses were not included in the analysis for two main reasons. First, some of the questionnaires were either wrongly filled or incomplete, or several missing data per case has been

experience. Specifically, a total of thirteen (13) questionnaires were excluded from the analysis for incompleteness. Secondly, univariate and multivariate outliers have also caused some questionnaires to be excluded in the analysis. As such fifteen (15) questionnaires were also omitted from the analysis based on problem of outlier. This is in line with the argument of Hair, Tatham, Anderson, and Black, (1998) that excluding such questionnaires is important as they did not represent the sample.

Table 4.1  
*Questionnaire Distribution and Decisions*

Item	Frequency	Percentage %
Distributed questionnaires	377	100
Unreturned/Not responded	95	25
Returned questionnaires	282	75
Rejected/Removed	28	7
Retained/Useable	254	68

### 4.3 Initial Data Examination, Screening and Preparation

Data screening, editing and preparation are critical stages taken before further multivariate analysis. Preliminary analysis is important as it helps to identify possible violation of the assumptions as they relate to the application of multivariate techniques(Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). Moreover, it lets the researcher to have more knowledge of the data collected. Hence, in the present study missing data, outliers, normality and multicollinearity were checked and treated before further analysis.

#### **4.3.1 Analysis of Missing Values**

Conducting a survey research, it is very rare to have a complete data set for all returned questionnaires, especially when the respondents are human (Pallant, 2010). Therefore, it is important to detect and treat missing data as it has negative impact on the analysis. In order to detect missing values, frequency table was generated using descriptive statistics. The result shows that out of 17,754 data points, only 78 were found randomly missing in the data set, which represents only 0.4 percent of the whole data collected. As such, the missing values in the present study are considered as non-significant as it fall below the tolerable value of 5 percent (Schafer, 1999; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Therefore, as suggested by researchers (Hair et al., 2014; Little, 1988; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) the missing values were replaced using mean substitution.

#### **4.3.2 Assessment of Outliers**

Outlier is viewed as an observation or it subsets that is not consistent with other observations or the remainder of a data set (Barnett & Lewis, 1994; Barnett & Lewis, 1986; Hodge & Austin, 2004). In the same vein, Hair et al., (2010) consider outlier as an observation that have a distinct combination of characteristics which looks to be different from other observations. It may be because of gross deviation from other observation's direction, therefore it must be discarded (Grubbs, 1974; Grubbs, 1969). Specifically, outliers are considered to have strong effect on the estimation of coefficients then consequently lead to misleading results (Verardi & Croux, 2008).



In line with the suggestions made by Hodge and Austin (2004), outliers in this study were detected using univariate and multivariate. As such, to discover univariate outliers, Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) suggest observations with a standardized value of  $\pm 3.29$  ( $p < 0.001$ ) is viewed to be an outlier, and therefore should be deleted. In addition, Hair et al., (2010) opined that 2.5 to 4 standard scores depending on the sample size to be used to detect univariate outliers (i.e., from a sample of 80 and below consider 2.5 to 3, while higher samples should consider standard scores of up to 4) is considered to be an outlier.

In line with suggestion made by Tabachnick & Fidell (2007), the present study also use Mahalanobis  $D^2$  to detect multivariate outliers. Therefore, Mahalanobis was calculated using linear regression methods in IBM SPSS v18, followed by the computation of chi-square value. Based on 66 items in this study, 65 denote the degree of freedom in the chi-square table with  $P < 0.001$ , so the criterion is 107.26 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Following the aforementioned discussions, the present study employed univariate to check outliers, and 15 cases (i.e., 1, 86, 92, 99, 100, 133, 135, 151, 209, 221, 264, 266, 267, 268, and 269) were deleted, and thus removed from the data set. Consequently, multivariate method was also used and no outlier was detected.

#### **4.3.3 Normality Test**

Normality is viewed as the shape of the data distribution of a metric variable and its correspondence with the normal distribution (Hair et al., 2010). Although, previous studies (Cassel, Hackl, & Westlund, 1999; Qureshi & Compeau, 2009; Reinartz, Haenlein, & Henseler, 2009; Wetzels, Odekerken-Schröder, & van Oppen, 2009) have

argued that using PLS-SEM the data need not to be normally distributed, as such it works perfectly with non-normal data. However, it was suggested that researchers should consider checking the data to see if the data is not too far from being normal (Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Mena, 2012; Hair et al., 2014). The argument of the researchers was in line with the argument that very skewed data tend to increase bootstrapping mistakes, and therefore may undervalue the statistical significance of path coefficients (Chernick, 2008; Hair et al., 2012; Dijkstra, 1983). Nevertheless, Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) have argued that deviation from normality of Skewness and Kurtosis often does not make an essential difference in the analysis where the sample size is above 200.

Consequently, the present study used multivariate normality in order to ascertain the data distribution using Kurtosis (the flatness of the distribution compared with the normal distribution) and Skewness (the balance distribution at centered/symmetrical with about the shape on both sides) (Hair et al., 2010). Curran, West, & Finch, (1996) as well as West et al., (1995) suggest that Skewness values should not be above 2 and Kurtosis values should be less than 7. In the same vein, Kline, (2011) also argued that the absolute value of Skewness above 3 and Kurtosis value above 10 may show a problem and values greater than 20 shows a more serious problem. Therefore, in line with this suggestion, the absolute values of the Skewness and Kurtosis of all items in the present study are within the range of  $< 2$  and  $< 7$ , respectively which is considered as an acceptable value.

#### **4.3.4 Multicollinearity**

According to Hair et al., (2010) multicollinearity is concern with the connection between two or more independent variables, where the exogenous variables demonstrate slight correlation with other independent variables. Multicollinearity is said to arise when the exogenous variables are greatly correlated to each other (Hair et al., 2010; Pallant, 2010; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). As such, where two or more exogenous variables are extremely correlated, then it means that they have unnecessary information. And such is not required in the same analysis as they rise the error terms.

Specifically, multicollinearity exist between the exogenous variables when the correlation among independent variables is as 90 percent ( $r= 0.9$ ) or is above (Hair et al., 2010; Pallant, 2010). Hence, to test the multicollinearity issue between the exogenous variables in the study, the correlation matrix was evaluated (Chatterjee & Yilmaz, 1992; Peng & Lai, 2012). As contain in the Table 4.2, the correlation among the exogenous variables is lower than threshold of 0.9. Therefore, this indicates that there is no multicollinearity problem among the variables in line with the result obtained (Hair et al., 2010; Pallant, 2010).

Table 4.2

*Multicollinearity Test: Correlation Matrix*

<b>Constructs</b>	<b>TSF</b>	<b>TSL</b>	<b>BR</b>	<b>BT</b>	<b>BC</b>	<b>BF</b>
TSF	1					
TSL	.660**	1				
BR	.701**	.563**	1			
BT	.466**	.562**	.479**	1		
BC	-.343**	-.475**	-.364**	-.616**	1	
BF	.578**	.476**	.532**	.326**	-.152*	1

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Furthermore, Hair et al., (2014) argued that multicollinearity among exogenous variables can be detected by examining the variance inflation factor (VIF) and corresponding tolerance value. In addition, Hair et al., (2014) suggested that a tolerance level of 0.20 and below and a VIF value of 5 and above shows that there is existence of multicollinearity between the independent variables. Tables 4.3 contain the VIF and the tolerance values, and are below the threshold of 5 and above 0.20 respectively.

Table 4.3

*Multicollinearity Test: Tolerance and VIF*

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Collinearity Statistics</b>	
	<b>Tolerance</b>	<b>VIF</b>
TSF	.378	2.648
TSL	.452	2.214
BR	.453	2.209
BT	.502	1.992
BC	.578	1.730
BF	.609	1.643

As shown from the table above, the tolerance levels of all the exogenous variables are above 0.20 and the VIF are below 5 of all the variables. Hence, it indicates that there is absence of multicollinearity among the variables.

#### **4.4 Test for Non-response Bias**

Non-response is viewed as the failure of a researcher to acquire information from certain subject/respondent been sampled, meanwhile non-response bias is the bias that is caused by the in ability to obtain the information (Hawkins, 1975). In addition, non-response bias is considered to be an expected error a researcher can make while approximating a sample characteristics, this may be as a result of the fact that some types of survey respondents are under-represented due to non-response (Berg, 2005). Non-response bias is said to be a problem that arises in surveys when the responses from respondents/ subjects differ in meaningful ways from those that did not respond or answer. According to Yehuda, (1999) non-response bias is viewed as inability to obtain information from respondents.

In addition, the problem of non-response error is obtained from the answers to questions, and the info that respondents provide differ from those who declined to answer or respond (Armstrong & Overton, 1977). As such, if there is a problem of non-response bias, it will be difficult to say how a total sample responded based on the results. Therefore, the problem of non-response bias may affect the generality of the sample population. Similarly, it was recommended to investigate non-response bias no matter

how small it is (Pearl & Fairley, 1985; Sheikh & Mattingly, 1981). Hence, it is significant to evaluate the error before further investigation or analysis.

Moreover, to over-come the problem that may occur as a result non-response bias, sample size of the study was increased by 50% based on the suggestion of Salkind (1997); personal visits, follow-up via phone calls, and some gifts and consultations were presented as motivation (Churchill Jr. & Iacobucci, 2004). Additionally, the difference between those that responded early and those that responded late was compared using the study variables. Thus, respondents were separated into two groups based on early and late respondents, to test the response bias.

All the variables including the dependent, independent, and mediating variable were subjected to an independent sample t-test to ascertain the existence of any bias among the groups. As such, Levine's test of quality of variance was used to see if the groups differ. In the same vein, based on Levine's test, the two-tailed quality of means t-test was used to see the p value related with the hypotheses, in order to know whether or not there is a substantial difference among the early responses and late responses.

Table 4.4

*Group Descriptive statistics for Early and Late Respondents*

Variables	Response	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
BL	Early	111	4.4958	.54662	.05188
	Late	143	4.5051	.56067	.04689
BR	Early	111	4.6595	.72342	.06866
	Late	143	4.6951	.74374	.06219
BT	Early	111	4.7005	.63229	.06001
	Late	143	4.6836	.64113	.05361
BC	Early	111	4.5658	.79994	.0593
	Late	143	4.5510	.81057	.06778
BF	Early	111	4.6599	.80678	.07658
	Late	143	4.6486	.80559	.06737
BCB	Early	111	4.6671	.55167	.05236
	Late	143	4.6727	.56174	.04698

Note: BL= Brand Leadership, BR= Brand Reward, BT= Brand Training, BC= Brand Communication, BF= Brand Fit, BCB= Brand Citizenship Behavior.

Table 4.5  
Independent Sample Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
BL	Equal variances assumed	.108	.742	-.133	252	.894	-.00933	.07015	-.14750	.12883
	Equal variances not assumed			-.133	239.363	.894	-.00933	.06993	-.14709	.12842
BR	Equal variances assumed	.069	.793	-.383	252	.702	-.03565	.09297	-.21874	.14745
	Equal variances not assumed			-.385	239.603	.701	-.03565	.09264	-.21815	.14686
BC	Equal variances assumed	.076	.783	.144	252	.885	.01472	.10195	-.18607	.21550
	Equal variances not assumed			.145	238.067	.885	.01472	.10178	-.18579	.21522



Table 4.5 (Continued)

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
BT	Equal variances assumed	.102	.750	.209	252	.834	.01688	.08062	-.14188	.17565
	Equal variances not assumed			.210	238.141	.834	.01688	.08047	-.14165	.17542
BF	Equal variances assumed	.000	.994	.111	252	.912	.01131	.10197	-.18952	.21214
	Equal variances not assumed			.111	236.444	.912	.01131	.10199	-.18962	.21224
BCB	Equal variances assumed	.053	.818	-.080	252	.937	-.00561	.07051	-.14447	.13325
	Equal variances not assumed			-.080	238.593	.937	-.00561	.07035	-.14419	.13297

As shown in Table 4.4, the independent samples t-test for quality has indicated that the group mean and standard deviation for early responses and late responses did not differ. In addition as shown in Table 4.5 the t-test results has indicated that there is slight difference between the early responses and the late responses. Based on the items in BL ( $t = 0.133$ ,  $p < .894$ ), BR ( $t = .383$ ,  $p < .702$ ), BT ( $t = .209$ ,  $p < .834$ ), BC ( $t = .144$ ,  $p < .885$ ) BF ( $t = .111$ ,  $p < .912$ ) and BCB ( $t = .080$ ,  $p < .937$ ) respectively. Hence, the results shows that these items are statistically different, the differences are quite small and not significant to affect the overall results.

#### **4.5 Common Method Bias**

According to Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff, (2003) is viewed as the variance that is invariably attributed to the measurement procedure rather than on the actual constructs the measures are presenting. Considering the fact that in behavioral studies, one of the main sources of measurement error is common method bias there is serious concern on how to reduce or eliminate it.

The present study has used self-reported data from employees (frontline and back stage employees) of telecommunication companies in Nigeria, which creates potential for common method variance (CMV). This has indicated that the predictors (i.e., internal branding practices, and employee brand fit) and criterion variable (employee brand citizenship behavior) were obtained from the same single source or rater (employee). In order to address the issue of common variance, both procedural and statistical measures

suggested by Podsakoff et al., (2003) were taken. Some of these measures include elimination of item ambiguity, allowing respondent's anonymity and Harman's single-factor test.

Harman's single-factor has been considered as the most widely used technique among researchers to address the problem of CMV. The procedure involves loading simultaneously altogether the variables in the study into exploratory factor analysis and then observes the un-rotated factor solution in order to establish the number of factors that are essential to account for variance in the variables. It is stated in the rules that if a substantial amount of CMV exists. In the present study, un-rotated factor analysis of all variables has revealed that no single factor accounted for more than 50% of the variance. Therefore, CMV may not be a problem in the study in line with the arguments of Podsakoff et al., (2003) and Lowry and Gaskin, (2014), that a common method bias is said to exist where a single factor explains more than 50% of the variance.

#### **4.6 Description of the Sample of Study**

This section is mainly focused on the description of the sample of the study. It covers the description of the sample at individual level. Table 4.6 presents the demographic information of the respondents who have participated in the present survey. The respondents consist of all employees (both frontline and backstage employees) of Nigeria telecommunication companies (MTN, GLO, ETISALAT, AIRTEL, VODAFONE and MULTILINKS) in Kano state, Nigeria.

Table 4.6

*Description of Sample Characteristics*

S/No.	Item	N	Percentage (%)
1	<b>Company</b>		
	MTN	86	33.9
	GLO	50	19.7
	AIRTEL	33	13
	ETISALAT	47	18.5
	VODAFONE	22	8.7
	MULTILINK	16	6.3
2	<b>Customer-contact</b>		
	Yes (Frontline)	157	61.8
	No (Backstage)	97	38.2
3	<b>Job status</b>		
	Permanent	81	31.9
	Temporary	59	23.2
	Contract	114	44.9
4	<b>Working Experience</b>		
	10 years and above	37	14.6
	5- 10 years	70	27.6
	1- 5 years	82	32.3
	Less than 1 year	65	25.6
5	<b>Educational Background</b>		
	Doctorate	4	1.6
	Master degree	43	16.9
	First degree	82	32.3
	Diploma/NCE	53	20.9
	Secondary	43	16.9
	Others	29	11.4

Table 4.6 (Continued)

S/No.	Item	N	Percentage (%)
6	<b>Department/Units</b>		
	Sales and distribution	45	17.7
	Customer relation	65	25.6
	Engineering/technical	42	16.5
	Online	39	15.4
	Security	30	11.8
	Agency	22	8.7
	Others	10	3.9

First as shown in table 4.6 respondents were requested to indicate the brand they work, and the results revealed that majority are from MTN. This may be as a result of the brand is having the largest sample as such have the highest number of respondents. The descriptive analysis also revealed that 33.9% are employees from MTN, 19.7% are from GLO, while 13% are employees from AIRTEL. In addition, the result revealed that 18.5% are employees of ETISLAT, 8.7% from VODAFONE while 6.3% are employees of MULTILINKS.

Similarly, the respondents were asked to indicate if they have direct contact with the brand customer or not. The result shows that the majority of the respondents have direct contact with the customers of the brand. In terms of their job status, the results revealed that almost 50% of the respondents are contract employees. Additionally, the descriptive statistics shows that many of the respondents have long working experience. In addition, the results obtained have shown that many of the respondents have their first degree. And lastly, the result revealed that the respondents are from main departments in the company

(sales and distribution, customer relation, agency, security, engineering/technical, and online department). Therefore, the data used in the present were obtained from different departments.

#### **4.7 Evaluation of PLS-SEM Result**

In the section, evaluation of results obtained from PLS-SEM was presented. After checking and screening of data, the next step was to assess the outer model (measurement model) and the inner model (structural model) (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2013; Esposito, Trinchera, & Amato, 2010). Specifically, PLS-SEM was used to evaluate the direct and indirect (mediating) results in this study. Smart PLS 3.0 was used to determine the causal links among the constructs in the theoretical models.

Before the main analysis, there is the need to configure the model in a way that it will be clearly understood. As such, indicators should be clarified as to which indicator is reflective or are formative. This is important as the approach to testing reflective measurement model is quite different from the approach used in testing formative measurement model (Hair et al., 2013; Lowry & Gaskin, 2014). In a reflective measurement model, it is assumed that the latent variable causes the measurement items; therefore deleting any item does not change the meaning of the construct. Meanwhile, formative measurement model the directions of the arrows are from the indicators or items to the latent variable, this signifies that it is the indicators that cause the latent variable. In the present study, all the indicators of latent variables are reflective.

In addition, the analysis involves testing both first order and second-order structures. In other words, two study constructs in the inner model (structural model) were treated as second-order construct. In particular, the dependent variable employee BCB and one independent variable were treated as reflective-reflective type1 of hierarchical component model (HCM) (see Porricelli et al, 2014 and Du Preez et al., 2017). Therefore, the dimensions of employee BCB and the brand leaderships were considered as first order constructs. Specifically, the study employed reflective-reflective approach based on the fact that the constructs in the first-order causes the measure (items) and the second-order constructs causes the dimensions (Thien, Shafaei, & Rasoolimanesh, 2017). Furthermore, the items and the dimensions measuring the construct are interchangeable; as such dropping one or two items or the dimensions would not change the conceptual meaning of the construct (see Shaari et al., 2012; 2015; Burmann et al., 2009). Therefore, in this study, the items and dimensions measuring the constructs (brand leadership and BCB) were treated as reflective measures as dropping one dimension or item of the measure may not change the meaning of the constructs. Thus, the items and two dimensions of brand leadership and four dimensions of employee BCB constructs are reflective first-order and second-order constructs.

Additionally, the study employed repeated indicators approach as the approach is considered to be more appropriate where the indicators are reflective and it also simple as the second order factor is directly measured by observed variables of all the first order factors (Ciavolino & Nitti, 2010; Ciavolino, 2012). In addition, the approach has the benefit/advantage of approximating all constructs simultaneously instead of estimating

lower-order and higher-order dimensions separately (Becker, Klein, & Wetzels, 2012). Consequently, it take into account the whole nomological network, therefore it avoid interpretational confounding. Specifically, the study has five exogenous constructs independent variables (brand leadership, brand reward, brand training and brand communication) and a mediating variable namely employee brand fit. In addition, this study has endogenous variables a mediating variable and one dependent variable brand citizenship behavior BCB.

#### **4.7.1 The Measurement Model**

In PLS-SEM analysis, the first stage is to ascertain the outer model (measurement model). In this involves determining how well the indicators (items) load theoretically and associate with respective constructs. In other words, the analysis of measurement model (outer model) confirms that the items measure the constructs they are supposed to measure, hence ensuring that they are reliable and valid.

In PLS-SEM analysis evaluating outer model involves two main criteria this include reliability and validity of constructs (Hair et al. 2014; Hulland, 1999; Ramayah, Lee, & In, 2011). This is important as the conclusion on the nature of the connection between constructs depends on the reliability and validity of the measures. First individual item reliabilities, i.e. indicator reliability and internal consistency reliability using composite reliability (CR) is assessed. Secondly, convergent validity associated with individual constructs is also assessed using average variance extracted AVE. In the same vein, discriminant validity is assessed using both Fornell and Larcker, (1981) criterion and the



outer loadings of the indicators. In the study, PLS algorithm was performed in order to ascertain the reliability and validity of the constructs (Geladi & Kowalski, 1986).

In line with Hair et al.(2014) it was suggested that an indicator with loading less than 0.70 should be deleted if its removal increases the AVE or composite reliability (CR). Therefore, items with loading of 0.40 to 0.70 should not be automatically eliminated; as such the deletion is subject to achieving AVE and composite reliability (Hair et al. 2014). Furthermore, to ascertain the internal consistency, the study assessed the composite reliability of constructs. According to Hair et al. (2014) the internal consistency can be achieved through either assessing the CR or Cronbach alpha of each construct. Unlike Cronbach alpha, CR does not assume an equal indicator loading of construct. The threshold value of CR should not be less than 0.60 (Henseler, Ringle, & Sinkovics, 2009). Hair, et al. (2014) argued that a value from 0.70 and above is more desirable. As such, CR value between 0.60 and 0.70 shows an average internal consistency, on the other hand values of 0.70 and 0.90 are considered as more adequate (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). Hence, in the present study, CR values were examined for all the constructs, and the results in Table 4.7 and 4.8 contain the results obtained for both first-order and second-order factors respectively and all exceeding the threshold value of 0.70 and 0.50 for CR and AVE respectively (Hair et al. 2014; Henseler et al. 2009).

The next is to ascertain the convergent validity which is considered as the extent to which measures of the same constructs that are theoretically related to each other are related (Henseler et al. 2009). As such, it shows the degree of correlation among the measures of

a particular construct (Hair et al., 2014). Therefore, to establish the convergent validity in the measurements of the construct, AVE is used and 0.50 and beyond is regarded as threshold value (Hair et al., 2014; Henseler et al., 2009). As such AVE value of 0.50 shows that a latent construct explain 50% variance of its indicators, hence indicates an adequate convergent validity (Hair et al. 2014). Therefore, to assess convergent validity of this study, AVE of all the constructs was examined. This is also contained in Table 4.7 for first order and Table 4.8 for second order constructs and all the AVE of the constructs are beyond the threshold value of 0.50 (Hair et al. 2014; Henseler et al., 2009).

Table 4.7  
*Loadings, Reliability and Convergent Validity Values*

Variables	Items	Loading	AVE	CR	Convergent Validity
BHB	BCB2	0.725	0.641	0.877	YES
	BCB6	0.845			
	BCB7	0.774			
	BCB8	0.852			
S-P	BCB9	0.793	0.677	0.807	YES
	BCB10	0.851			
B-E	BCB11	0.900	0.819	0.901	YES
	BCB13	0.910			
S-D	BCB14A	0.838	0.524	0.814	YES
	BCB14B	0.731			
	BCB14D	0.655			
	BCB14E	0.658			

Table 4.7 (Continued)

Variables	Items	Loading	AVE	CR	Convergent Validity
TSF	TSF1	0.700	0.545	0.929	YES
	TSF2	0.830			
	TSF3	0.702			
	TSF9	0.741			
	TSF11	0.734			
	TSF12	0.845			
	TSF13	0.738			
	TSF14	0.781			
	TSF16	0.693			
	TSF17	0.667			
TSL	TSF20	0.830	0.568	0.886	YES
	TSL5	0.729			
	TSL6	0.865			
	TSL7	0.735			
	TSL8	0.842			
	TSL9	0.644			
	TSL10	0.681			
BR	BR2	0.837	0.756	0.903	YES
	BR3	0.931			
	BR4	0.853			
BT	BT1	0.822	0.716	0.910	YES
	BT2	0.883			
	BT3	0.825			
	BT4	0.853			

Table 4.7 (Continued)

Variables	Items	Loading	AVE	CR	Convergent Validity
BC	BC1	0.872	0.675	0.912	YES
	BC2	0.781			
	BC3	0.816			
	BC4	0.799			
	BC5	0.838			
BF	BF1	0.803	0.665	0.887	YES
	BF2	0.873			
	BF3	0.866			
	BF4	0.710			

Note: BHB= Brand Helping Behavior; B-E= Brand Endorsement; S-P= Sportsmanship; S-D= Self-brand Development; TSF=Transformational Brand Leadership; TSL=Transactional Brand Leadership; BR=Brand Reward; BT= Brand Training; BC=Brand Communication; BF=Brand Fit

Table 4.8  
Second-order Convergent Validity

Constructs	Composite reliability (CR)	AVE	Convergent Validity
BCB	0.882	0.653	YES
BL	0.866	0.765	YES

Note: BCB= Brand Citizenship Behavior; BL= Brand Leadership

Furthermore, discriminant validity was ascertained, which is considers being the extent to which the constructs differ from one another. In other words, the measures of a particular construct measure the construct it supposed to measure, that is the constructs are theoretically not related to each other (Churchill, 1979; Hair et al. 2014). There are basically two methods or approaches to assess the discriminant validity. The conventional approach through Fornell and Larcker (1981) criterion and secondly through the

investigation of cross-loadings of the constructs, which is considered to be more liberal than the first approach (Hair et al. 2014).

Following Fornell and Lacker (1981) criterion, discriminant validity is established when the value of the square root ( $R^2$ ) of AVE of each constructs is greater than the construct's highest correlation with any other latent variable (Hair et al., 2014; Henseler et al., 2009). As such, the study assesses the discriminant validity by relating the  $R^2$  of the AVE of each construct with the connections presented in the correlation matrix. As shown in Table 4.9 the  $R^2$  of AVE in bold is more than its construct's relationship with any other latent variables. Hence, conclusively discriminant validity is achieved (Hair et al., 2014; Henseler et al., 2009).



Table 4.9  
*Discriminant Validity*

Constructs	B-E	BC	BF	BHB	BR	BT	S-D	S-P	TSF	TSL
B-E	<b>0.905</b>									
BC	-0.241	<b>0.822</b>								
BF	0.417	-0.222	<b>0.815</b>							
BHB	0.466	-0.439	0.641	<b>0.801</b>						
BR	0.312	-0.345	0.591	0.59	<b>0.869</b>					
BT	0.274	-0.589	0.377	0.6	0.383	<b>0.846</b>				
S-D	0.503	-0.456	0.527	0.689	0.52	0.486	<b>0.724</b>			
S-P	0.61	-0.153	0.492	0.595	0.333	0.298	0.425	<b>0.823</b>		
TSF	0.462	-0.335	0.63	0.583	0.573	0.45	0.533	0.357	<b>0.738</b>	
TSL	0.358	-0.381	0.525	0.523	0.436	0.518	0.334	0.412	0.563	<b>0.754</b>

Note. The bold values are the square root of AVE

Furthermore, the factor loadings were used in this study to assess the discriminant validity. The outer loadings were examined based on threshold value of 0.50 and above (Hair et al., 2010). Nevertheless, based on the argument put forward by Hair et al., (2014) loadings from 0.40 to 0.70 were deleted only if their deletion increases AVE or composite reliability. As such, out of 66 items of the study 21 items were deleted. In particular, 6 items were deleted from the initial 18 items of employee BCB, while 13 items measuring brand leadership were deleted due to either lower loading or to increase AVE or CR. In addition, 2 items measuring brand reward were deleted due to lower loading.

Table 4.10 below shows that the outer loadings of all the constructs have exceeded the threshold of 0.50 and above which indicate a satisfactory contribution of indicators to assigned construct. In addition, based on the loadings and cross loadings of the constructs, indicate that there is no problem of discriminant validity in this study; as indicator's outer loadings on a construct are above all its cross loadings with their constructs.

Table 4.10

*Loadings and Cross-loadings*

CONSTRUCTS	BHB	S-P	B-E	S-D	BC	BF	BR	BT	TSF	TSL
BCB2	<b>0.725</b>	0.507	0.352	0.576	-0.383	0.443	0.593	0.368	0.448	0.421
BCB6	<b>0.845</b>	0.397	0.332	0.486	-0.348	0.6	0.41	0.557	0.578	0.432
BCB7	<b>0.774</b>	0.512	0.516	0.478	-0.269	0.409	0.309	0.501	0.36	0.46
BCB8	<b>0.852</b>	0.479	0.288	0.555	-0.401	0.598	0.567	0.494	0.479	0.358
BCB9	0.61	<b>0.851</b>	0.391	0.38	-0.182	0.559	0.388	0.266	0.236	0.329
BCB10	0.352	<b>0.793</b>	0.633	0.316	-0.062	0.227	0.143	0.222	0.362	0.352
BCB11	0.421	0.639	<b>0.9</b>	0.359	-0.2	0.322	0.202	0.213	0.409	0.351
BCB13	0.423	0.47	<b>0.91</b>	0.548	-0.235	0.43	0.359	0.281	0.427	0.298
BCB14A	0.551	0.383	0.594	<b>0.838</b>	-0.425	0.396	0.392	0.481	0.444	0.234
BCB14B	0.428	0.36	0.472	<b>0.731</b>	-0.393	0.235	0.144	0.309	0.197	0.045
BCB14D	0.502	0.159	0.235	<b>0.655</b>	-0.26	0.478	0.567	0.329	0.447	0.355
BCB14E	0.526	0.304	0.066	<b>0.658</b>	-0.209	0.451	0.448	0.261	0.478	0.375
BC1	-0.467	-0.067	-0.232	-0.492	<b>0.872</b>	-0.218	-0.264	-0.621	-0.321	-0.333
BC2	-0.333	-0.215	-0.234	-0.384	<b>0.781</b>	-0.056	-0.223	-0.375	-0.272	-0.317
BC3	-0.266	-0.044	-0.128	-0.339	<b>0.816</b>	-0.272	-0.323	-0.42	-0.29	-0.321
BC4	-0.27	-0.112	-0.222	-0.242	<b>0.799</b>	-0.156	-0.239	-0.509	-0.26	-0.342
BC5	-0.417	-0.199	-0.176	-0.368	<b>0.838</b>	-0.196	-0.359	-0.466	-0.231	-0.266
BF1	0.648	0.448	0.382	0.536	-0.293	<b>0.803</b>	0.467	0.447	0.589	0.493
BF2	0.609	0.462	0.388	0.462	-0.227	<b>0.873</b>	0.485	0.365	0.592	0.45
BF3	0.449	0.376	0.394	0.416	-0.194	<b>0.866</b>	0.561	0.228	0.477	0.423



Table 4.10 (Continued)

CONSTRUCTS	BHB	S-P	B-E	S-D	BC	BF	BR	BT	TSF	TSL
BF4	0.305	0.278	0.13	0.243	0.085	<b>0.71</b>	0.41	0.115	0.342	0.317
BR2	0.536	0.239	0.231	0.421	-0.323	0.504	<b>0.837</b>	0.435	0.392	0.462
BR3	0.545	0.339	0.339	0.445	-0.306	0.5	<b>0.931</b>	0.351	0.532	0.392
BR5	0.455	0.287	0.241	0.488	-0.27	0.536	<b>0.836</b>	0.215	0.565	0.283
BT1	0.492	0.273	0.398	0.502	-0.504	0.323	0.388	<b>0.822</b>	0.513	0.447
BT2	0.54	0.344	0.333	0.398	-0.49	0.34	0.373	<b>0.883</b>	0.405	0.431
BT3	0.499	0.256	0.056	0.334	-0.468	0.315	0.256	<b>0.825</b>	0.259	0.452
BT4	0.497	0.105	0.073	0.394	-0.534	0.293	0.251	<b>0.853</b>	0.308	0.422
TSF1	0.436	0.189	0.264	0.235	-0.293	0.455	0.347	0.34	<b>0.7</b>	0.453
TSF2	0.458	0.377	0.357	0.301	-0.233	0.591	0.401	0.351	<b>0.83</b>	0.504
TSF3	0.45	0.361	0.427	0.425	-0.336	0.512	0.502	0.328	<b>0.702</b>	0.427
TSF9	0.471	0.272	0.384	0.529	-0.287	0.462	0.533	0.291	<b>0.741</b>	0.281
TSF11	0.546	0.395	0.355	0.449	-0.213	0.48	0.426	0.443	<b>0.734</b>	0.404
TSF12	0.468	0.171	0.211	0.423	-0.294	0.508	0.521	0.469	<b>0.845</b>	0.514
TSF13	0.4	0.246	0.416	0.469	-0.34	0.425	0.401	0.304	<b>0.738</b>	0.419
TSF14	0.435	0.193	0.365	0.471	-0.302	0.389	0.47	0.352	<b>0.781</b>	0.319
TSF16	0.294	0.239	0.275	0.373	-0.074	0.371	0.314	0.132	<b>0.693</b>	0.342
TSF17	0.271	0.128	0.295	0.264	-0.183	0.42	0.386	0.252	<b>0.667</b>	0.423
TSF20	0.485	0.329	0.43	0.406	-0.146	0.484	0.341	0.354	<b>0.664</b>	0.456
TSL5	0.422	0.41	0.394	0.379	-0.244	0.359	0.324	0.396	0.58	<b>0.729</b>

Table 4.10 (Continued)

CONSTRUCTS	BHB	S-P	B-E	S-D	BC	BF	BR	BT	TSF	TSL
TSL6	0.389	0.321	0.229	0.277	-0.251	0.491	0.435	0.409	0.485	<b>0.865</b>
TSL7	0.321	0.223	0.115	0.04	-0.25	0.288	0.146	0.379	0.287	<b>0.735</b>
TSL8	0.494	0.337	0.31	0.343	-0.337	0.575	0.404	0.481	0.502	<b>0.842</b>
TSL9	0.372	0.368	0.365	0.244	-0.346	0.304	0.32	0.301	0.318	<b>0.644</b>
TSL10	0.337	0.156	0.165	0.13	-0.329	0.28	0.288	0.351	0.267	<b>0.681</b>

Note. The bold values indicate the items that belong to the column's construct BHB= Brand Helping Behavior; B-E= Brand Endorsement; S-P= Sportsmanship; S-D= Self-brand Development; TSF=Transformational Brand Leadership; TSL=Transactional Brand Leadership; BR=Brand Reward; BT= Brand Training; BC=Brand Communication; BF=Brand Fit.



After successful evaluation of outer model also refers to as measurement model, as the latent variables of the study have indicated satisfactory evidence of validity and reliability. The next step was evaluation of the inner model or structural model. First there is the need to revise and amend the original framework after the assessment of outer model as it was obtained in literatures. This is because the analysis of the outer model has led to deletion of 21 items out of the original 66 items. However, the outer model assessment does not lead to elimination of any construct, and all the constructs have sufficient number of items per construct (Hair et al., 2014).



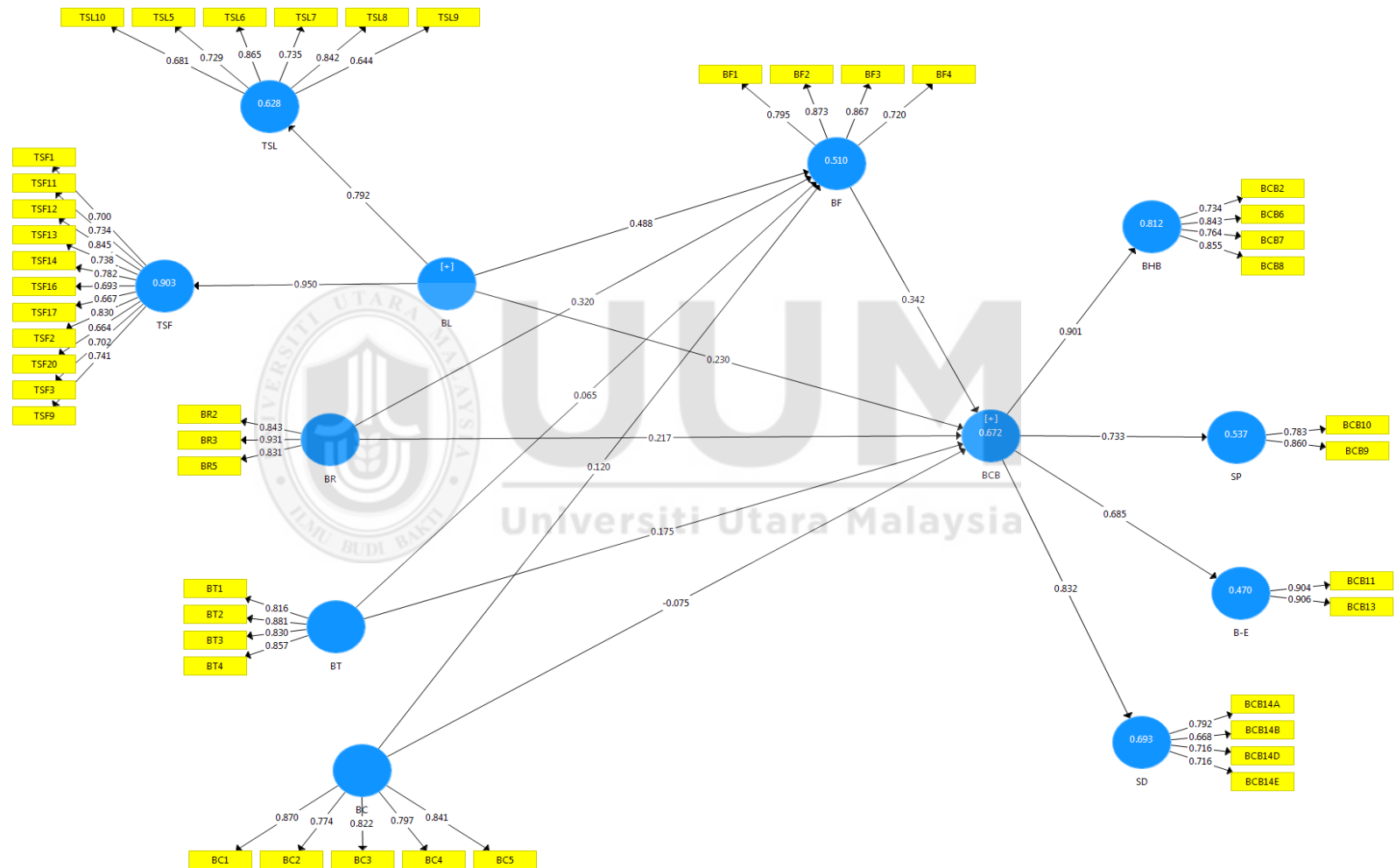


Figure 4.1  
Measurement Model

#### **4.7.2 Structural Model**

As earlier mentioned, after the measurement model or the outer model has been examined and the validity and reliability of the model are established, the next was to evaluate the structural model (inner model) results. Therefore, this section shows the structural equation model of the data analysis. The entire main and the mediating hypotheses were analyzed using PLS-SEM bootstrap analysis. However, it is the objective of this research to empirically explore the direct connection between the IVs, mediating variable and the DV, as well as the mediating role of employee brand fit on the connection between the IVs and the DV. The standards for evaluating the inner model in PLS-SEM are the determination of path coefficient, coefficient determination ( $R^2$ ), the effect size and predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ) (Hair et al., 2014).

##### **4.7.2.1 Direct Relationship**

In this study, the assessment of the inner model begins by the investigation of the direct association between IVs and the DV. The path coefficient was investigated through PLS-SEM algorithm, while the significance of the relationship was assessed using bootstrapping procedure in the SmartPLS 3.0. As such, the original cases was used and 5,000 was used for the bootstrapping sample (Hair et al., 2014; Henseler et al., 2009).

The objective of the recent study is to explore the direct relationship between the IV and the DV, in addition to the mediating role of employee brand fit on the connection between the IVs and DV. The study first presented the direct relationship between the IVs and DV (H1 to H4). And secondly the direct relationship between the IVs and

mediator was carried out, hence evaluating the meditational effect of employee brand fit (H5 to H8). In addition, the direct relationship between the mediator and the DV was also assessed. In the same vein, the mediation analysis was done, where (H9 to H13) were investigated.



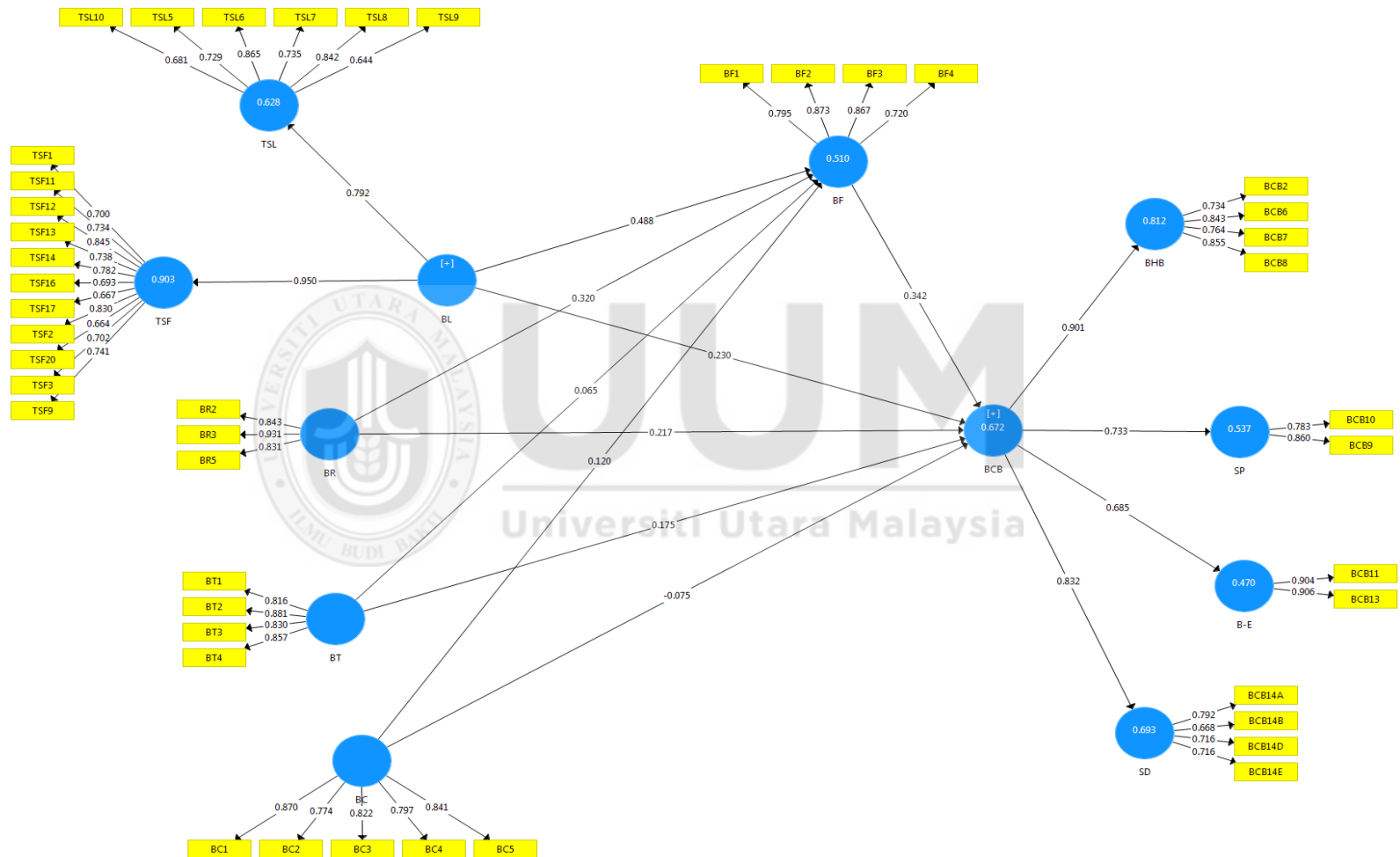


Figure 4.2 PLS-SEM algorithm

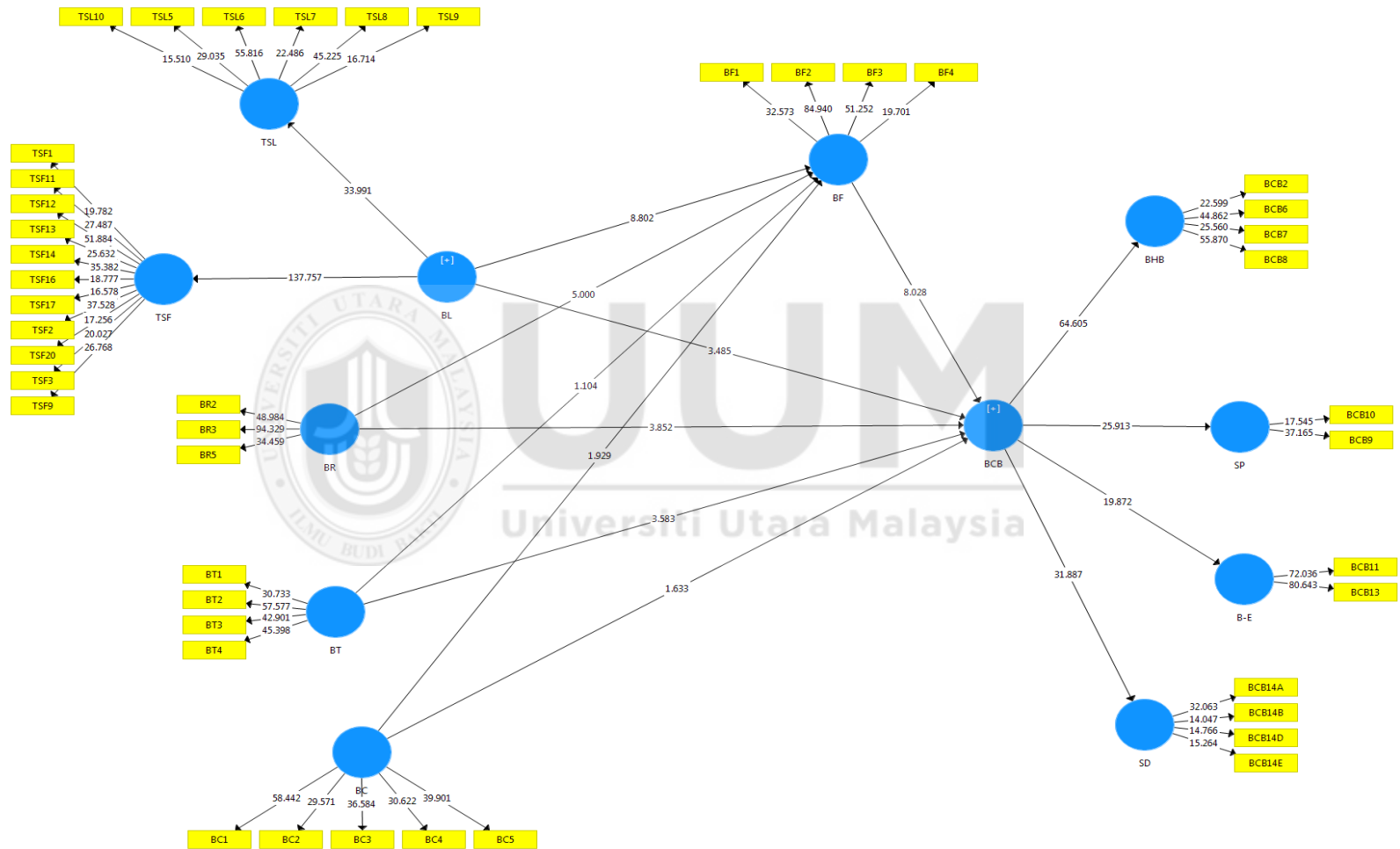


Figure 4.3  
PLS-SEM Bootstrapping



Based on PLS-SEM algorithm, Figure 4.2 indicates the path coefficient of the IVs and the DV. The results revealed that three of the IVs have a positive coefficient with the DV, while one variable have a negative coefficient value. On the other hand, figure 4.3 shows the relationship between the DV and the IVs. The result revealed that three of the exogenous variables are significant with the DV at  $p < 0.01$ , while one IV is not significant.

In particular, H1, the results reveals that there is significant relationship between BL and BCB ( $\beta 0.23$ ,  $t=3.114$ ); hence, H1 is supported. Similarly, the results revealed significant impact of BR on BCB ( $\beta 0.217$ ;  $t=3.612$ ); as such H2 is also supported. Additionally, H3 is supported ( $\beta 0.175$ ;  $t=3.584$ ); therefore the result show that there is significant relationship between BT and BCB. However, H4 is not supported because the result shows no significant impact of BC on BCB ( $\beta -0.075$ ;  $t=1.627$ ). In addition, the study assesses the impact of each brand leadership styles on employee BCB and brand fit. The bootstrapping results revealed that transformational brand leadership style have significant effect on employee BCB ( $\beta 0.318$ ;  $t=6.626$ ;  $p=0.000$ ) while significant relationship was revealed between transactional brand leadership and employee BCB ( $\beta 0.164$ ;  $T=2.765$ ;  $P=0.006$ ) (see appendix D). Equally, both transformational and transactional brand leadership were revealed to have significant impact on employee brand fit. In particular transformational was significant at ( $\beta 0.490$ ;  $t=8.703$ ) while transactional was significant at ( $\beta 0.259$ ;  $t=4.355$ ).

Table 4.11

*Results of Direct Relationship*

<b>Hypotheses/Path</b>	<b>Beta value</b>	<b>Standard Error</b>	<b>T Statistics</b>	<b>Decision</b>
H1 BL -> BCB	0.23	0.074	3.114*	Supported
H2 BR -> BCB	0.217	0.06	3.612*	Supported
H3 BT -> BCB	0.175	0.049	3.584*	Supported
H4 BC -> BCB	-0.075	0.046	1.627	Not Supported
H5 BL -> BF	0.488	0.055	8.827*	Supported
H6 BR -> BF	0.32	0.059	5.455*	Supported
H7 BT -> BF	0.065	0.057	1.125	Not Supported
H8 BC -> BF	0.12	0.06	1.982**	Supported
H9 BF -> BCB	0.342	0.045	7.591*	Supported

\*\* :  $p < 0.1$ ; \* :  $p < 0.01$

Furthermore, the connection between the IVs and the mediator (employee brand fit), along with mediator and the DV, were evaluated. As revealed above, Figure 4.2, the path coefficients between the mediator and the dependent variable is positive. While the path coefficients among the three IVs and the mediator is significant whereas one has insignificant path coefficient. The bootstrapping results as shown in Figure 4.3 shows that there is significant correlation between the mediator and the DV. In addition, a positive significant relationship was revealed between three independent variables and the mediator. While on the other hand, a non-significant relationship was found between one independent variable and the mediator. In addition, table 4.11 presents the beta value, and the t- statistics of the direct connection amongst the exogenous variables, mediator and the endogenous variable.

Hence, H5 is supported; it was found that BL have significant influence on BF ( $\beta 0.23$ ;  $t=3.144$ ). Equally, the direct relationship between two brand leadership styles and the mediator was assessed. The bootstrapping result revealed that transformational and transactional brand leadership are significant to employee brand fit (see appendix D). In particular, TSF was significant to brand fit ( $\beta 0.490$ ; 8.703) while TSL was significant to brand fit ( $\beta 0.259$ ; 4.355). In the same vein, H6 is also supported as the result revealed that BR have significant impact on BF ( $\beta 0.32$ ;  $t=5.455$ ). However, H7 is not supported, the result indicates that BT has no impact on BF ( $\beta 0.065$ ;  $t=1.125$ ). Likewise, with regards to H8 the result shows that BC has positive significant impact on BF ( $\beta 0.12$ ;  $t=1.982$ ). Additionally, the result revealed that employee brand fit has significant influence on BCB ( $\beta 0.342$ ;  $t=7.591$ ), hence H9 is also supported.

#### **4.7.2.2 Mediation Test**

As presented in Figure 4.4 below, three of the independent variables have significant beta values, while one has insignificant beta value with the mediator. In addition, the beta value between the mediator and the DV is positive and significant. Furthermore, the results from bootstrapping in Figure 4.5 indicate that the relationship between mediator and three independent variables is significant and one independent variable has no significant impact on the mediator. Equally, the relationship between the mediator and the DV is significant.

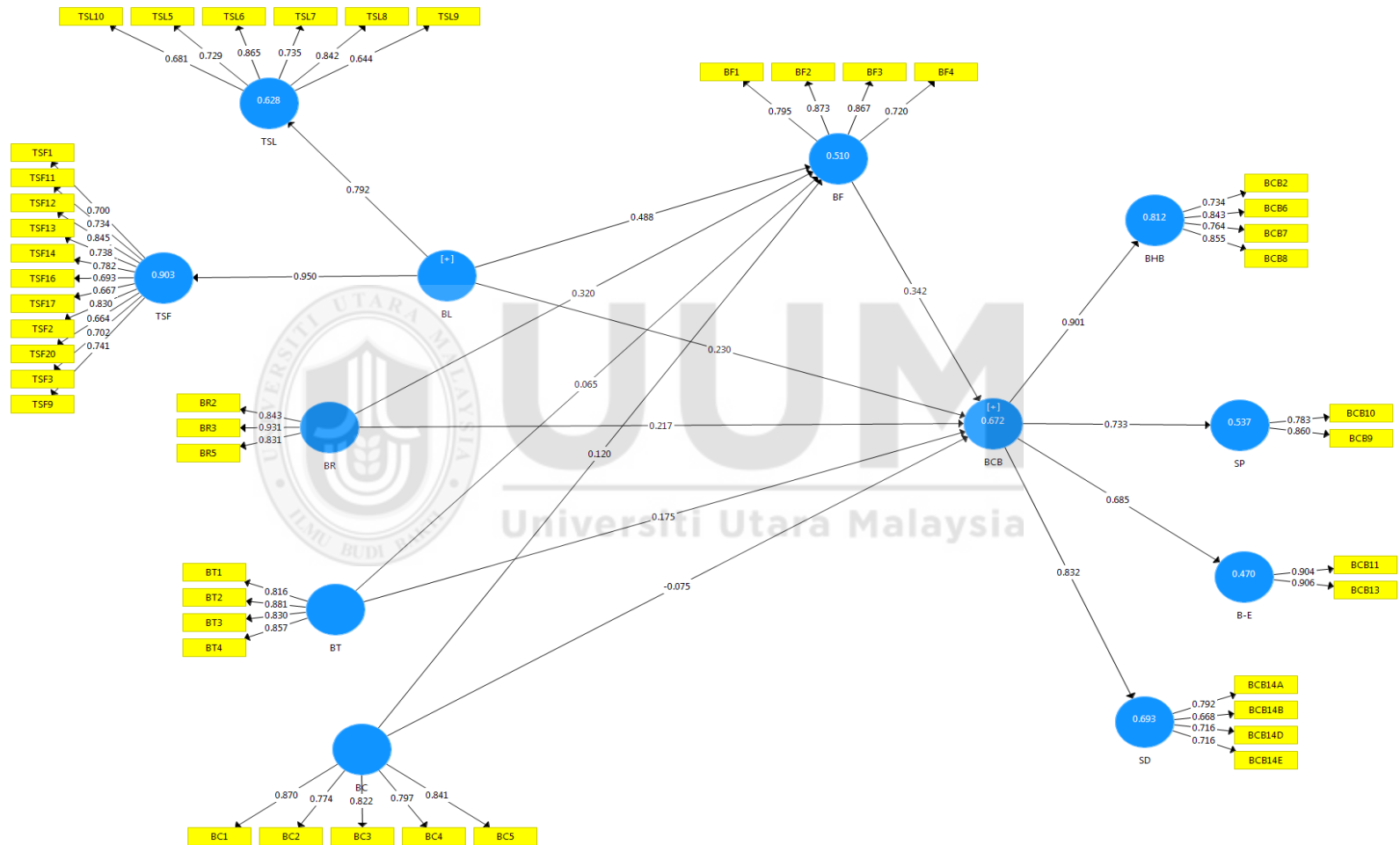


Figure 4.4  
Algorithm Indirect Relationship

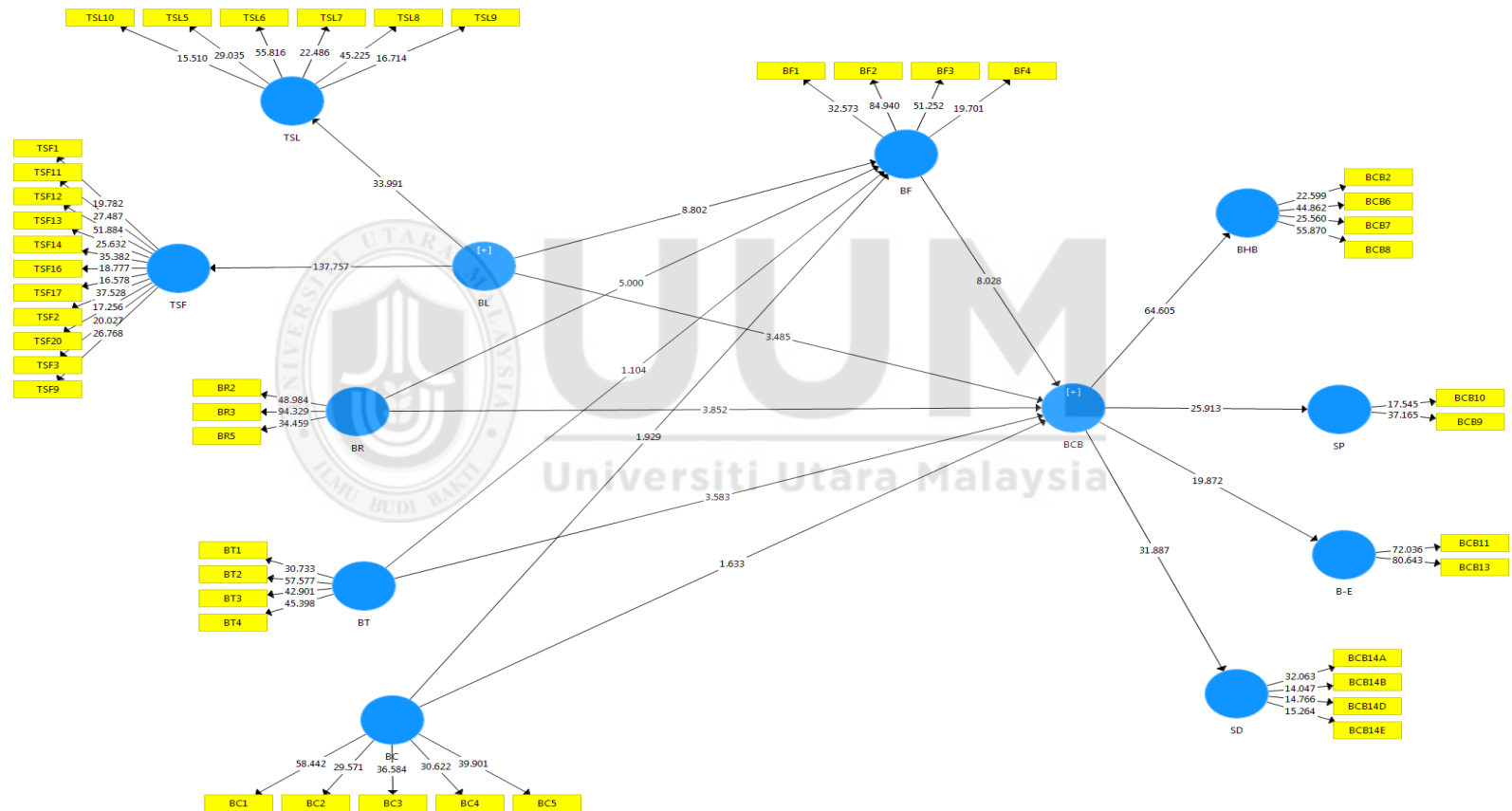


Figure 4.5  
*Bootstrapping Indirect Relationship*

In the intervention analysis, the indirect effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable is assessed through an intervening variable. Preacher and Hayes (2008) argued that there are numerous procedures for assessing mediation such as: Causal steps strategy or serial approach (Hoyle & Robinson, 2004), and is similarly referred to as four conditions of Baron and Kenny (Baron & Kenny, 1986). Furthermore, other techniques for intervention analysis include coefficient method or Sobel test (Sobel, 1982); distribution of the product approach (Mackinnon, Fairchild, & Fritz, 2007; MacKinnon, Fritz, Williams, & Lockwood, 2007; Mackinnon, Lockwood, & Williams, 2004); and bootstrapping approach (Hayes, 2009; Preacher & Hayes, 2004). Moreover, the most current technique or approach is the bootstrapping method (Hayes, 2009; Rucker, Preacher, Tormala, & Petty, 2011).

According to Baron and Kenny (1986), for mediation to hold four conditions must be happened. First the direct relationship between the IV and the DV must be significant. Nevertheless, this condition is not always required for significant effect between the IVs and the DV for mediation to hold. Rather indirect effect can occur in its absence and mediation could happen (Hayes, 2009; Zhao, Lynch, & Chen, 2010; Rucker et al. 2011; Shrout & Bolger, 2002). The next is the significant effects of indirect relationships. That is the significant impact of the IVs on the DV through the mediating variable (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). In other word, the effect of IVs on the mediator and the effect of the mediator on the DV (a and b). According to Preacher and Hayes (2008) if any of the indirect effects is not significant, then the mediator cannot mediate the relationship between the IV and the DV. Finally, the inclusion of the mediator variable changes the

direct effect of the IVs on the DV. That is to say, the effects of IV on the DV become smaller or insignificant as the mediator is introduced. However, Rucker et al. (2011) argued that this condition is not importance, as such used such terms such as partial vs. full mediation to explain the extent of the mediation.

Specifically, the study used PLS-SEM bootstrapping method to test the intervening role of employee brand fit on the connection among internal branding practices and employee's BCB. Many studies have emphasized the advantages of using bootstrapping method over other methods (Hair et al., 2014; Hayes & Preacher, 2010; Hayes, 2012; Preacher & Hayes 2008; Zhao et al., 2010). In particular, Hayes & Preacher (2010) argued that the four conditions of Baron and Kenny (1986) have failed to involve the use of standard errors. Similarly, Sobel test approach to mediation requires the assumption of normal sample distribution of the indirect effect. However, Preacher and Hayes (2008) argued that the sampling distribution of IVs effect on the mediator and the mediator's effect on the DV is asymmetric.

Additionally, it was argued that the main advantage of bootstrapping method is that it does not require any assumption about the sampling distributions of indirect effect (Hayes & Preacher 2010; Preacher & Hayes 2008). As such, this method could take care of the above mentioned flaws as it allows distribution of the indirect effect to be tested empirically (Shrout & Bolger 2002). In addition, the method provides interval estimate of the population parameter which the use of other methods such cannot be obtained

(Lockwood & MacKinnon, 1998). Therefore, this study followed Hayes and Preacher (2008) and Zhao et al (2010) arguments to test the mediation effect of employee brand fit.

The bootstrapping technique starts by first estimating the path model of direct effect of IVs on the DV without the mediator variable. Then the path model is estimated with the mediator variable. And lastly, the two path coefficient is divided by the standard error ( $\frac{(a * b)}{Sab}$ ) in order to investigate the significance of the indirect effect. Therefore, in the study after including the mediator variable, employee brand fit in model two, the bootstrapping result of 5,000 samples was employed to multiply path a and path b. As such, to obtain the t-value, the two significant paths are divided by the standard error of the product of the two paths ( $\frac{(a * b)}{Sab}$ ).

Table 4.12  
*Mediation Results*

Hypotheses/Path	Beta Value	Standard Error	T Statistics	P Values	Decision
H10 BL -> BF -> BCB	0.167	0.034	4.944*	0.00	Supported
H11 BR -> BF -> BCB	0.109	0.024	4.564*	0.00	Supported
					Not
H12 BT -> BF -> BCB	0.022	0.019	1.143	0.254	supported
H13 BC -> BF -> BCB	0.041	0.022	1.899**	0.058	Supported

\*\* : p<0.1; \* : p<0.01

From table 4.12, it shows that employee brand fit mediates the relationship between BL and employee BCB ( $\beta 0.167$ ;  $t = 4.944$ ;  $p < 0.00$ ) BR ( $\beta 0.109$ ;  $t = 4.564$ ;  $p < 0.00$ ). Similarly, table 4.12 indicates that employee brand fit mediate the relationship between BC and



employee BCB ( $\beta 0.041$ ;  $t=1.899$ ;  $p<0.058$ ). However, the results shows that employee brand fit does not mediate the relationship between BT and employee BCB ( $\beta 0.022$ ;  $t=1.143$ ;  $p<0.254$ ).

#### **4.7.2.3 Coefficient of Determination for Direct and Indirect Relationship ( $R^2$ )**

Coefficient of determination is considered to be the most common criteria of assessing the structural model of endogenous latent variables (Hair et al., 2014; Hair et al., 2011; Henseler et al., 2009).  $R^2$  represent the predictive accuracy of a model in a particular study (Hair et al., 2014). It is also considered to be the effects of all the IVs on the DV (Hair et al., 2014).

According to Hair et al., (2014) acceptable  $R^2$  value depends largely on the complexity of a model and the research discipline; as such it is difficult to provide a threshold. However, some studies have specified some values as a rule of thumb. In particular, Chin (1998) suggested that the R square values of 0.67 is substantial, 0.33 is moderate while 0.19 is considered weak in PLS-SEM modeling. Similarly, values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 were viewed as substantial, moderate, and weak R-square, particularly for studies that aimed at clarifying customer satisfaction or loyalty (Hair et al., 2014; Henseler et al., 2009).

Table 4.13

*Coefficient of Determination for Direct and Indirect Relationship (R<sup>2</sup>)*

<b>Construct</b>	<b>R-Square Value (R<sup>2</sup>)</b>
BCB	0.672
BF	0.510

Note BCB=brand citizenship behavior, BF=brand fit

As revealed in Table 4.13 above, the exogenous latent variables of this study (brand leadership, brand reward, brand training, brand communication and brand fit) can explain 67% variance of employee BCB. Therefore, based on Chin (1998) suggestion, the R-square value explained in this study by the exogenous variables on the endogenous variable in their direct relationship is considered substantial. On the other hand, 51% variance in employee brand fit as endogenous latent variable is explained by exogenous variable (BL, BR, BT and BC), the result of which is considered as moderate based on Chin (1988).

#### 4.7.2.4 Assessment of the Effect Size for Direct and Indirect Relationships

Having assessed the R-square of the endogenous construct (employee BCB), the next is to assess the effect size ( $f^2$ ) as suggested by Hair et al., (2014). Effect size is viewed as the difference in R-square between the main effects when a particular exogenous variable is included in the model and when it is omitted from the model. According to Hair et al., (2014) it is done to assess whether the excluded exogenous variable have a considerable influence on the endogenous variable. The  $f^2$  is calculated by means of Cohen's method (see Cohen, 1988; Hair et al., 2014) the formula is given

$$f^2 = \frac{R^2 \text{ Included} - R^2 \text{ excluded}}{1 - R^2 \text{ Included}}$$

In line with the argument put forward by Cohen (1988), where 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 represent small, medium, and large effects size respectively, as in Table 4.14 below shows the effects size of a particular exogenous variable on the endogenous variable (BCB) of the study. Equally, Table 4.15 contains the effect size of the IVs on the mediator (employee brand fit).

Table 4.14  
*Effect Size for Indirect Relationships (f<sup>2</sup>) BCB*

Construct	Included R <sup>2</sup>	Excluded R <sup>2</sup>	f <sup>2</sup>	Effect Size
BL	0.672	0.648	0.0732	Small
BR	0.672	0.650	0.0671	Small
BT	0.672	0.658	0.0427	Small
BC	0.672	0.667	0.0152	None
BF	0.672	0.581	0.2774	Medium

Note BL=brand leadership, BR=brand reward, BT=brand training, BC=brand communication, BF=brand fit

Table 4.15  
*Effect Size for Indirect Relationships (f<sup>2</sup>) BF*

Construct	Included R <sup>2</sup>	Excluded R <sup>2</sup>	f <sup>2</sup>	Effect Size
BL	0.510	0.382	0.269	Medium
BR	0.510	0.453	0.123	Small
BT	0.510	0.511	0.004	None
BC	0.510	0.501	0.025	Small

Note BL=brand leadership, BR=brand reward, BT=brand training, BC=brand communication

From Table 4.14 above, the result shows the assessment of effect size of particular exogenous latent constructs on the endogenous variable as in the direct relationships in the current study. Based on the results obtained, three of the exogenous (BL, BR and BT) have a small effect on the endogenous variable, while; BF has a medium effect on the exogenous variable (BCB). On the other, BC that is already not significantly related to employee BCB have not indicated any effect on the endogenous variable. In addition, Table 4.15 presents the results of effect size of exogenous variables on the endogenous variable (employee brand fit). One independent variable exhibits a medium effect on brand fit (BL), BR and BC exhibit small effect size respectively. But one independent variable exerts no effect on the endogenous variable (BT).

#### **4.7.2.5 Predictive Relevance for Direct and Indirect Relationship ( $Q^2$ )**

The next assessment of the inner model is the model's predictive relevance ability. This can be assessed by using Stone-Geisser criterion, which assumes that an inner model must be able to provide evidence of prediction of the endogenous latent variable's indicators (Henseler et al., 2009). Thus, in this study predictive relevance was assessed using PLS blindfolding procedures (Hair et al., 2014; Henseler et al., 2009). As such, this study used Stone-Geisser test to assess the  $Q^2$ , using blindfolding procedure to find the cross-validated redundancy measure for endogenous latent variable (Hair et al., 2014). Therefore, in line with the argument of Henseler et al., (2009) a model with  $Q^2$  greater than zero is assumed to have predictive relevance. Hence, Table 4.16 and figure 4.6 below shows the results obtained using the blindfolding procedure.

Table 4.16

*Predictive Relevance for Direct Relationship Q<sup>2</sup>*

Construct	SSO	SSE	1-SSE/SSO
BCB	4,572.00	3,615.28	0.209
BF	1,016.00	694.263	0.317

Note BCB=brand citizenship behavior, BF brand fit

Table 4.16 above, shows the blindfolding outcome of the cross-validated redundancy ( $Q^2$ ) of the latent endogenous variable of the direct and indirect relationships model in the present study. From the result obtained, the  $Q^2$  is above zero, hence it indicate the existence of path model predictive relevance (Chin, 1998; Hair et al., 2014; Hayes, 2009).



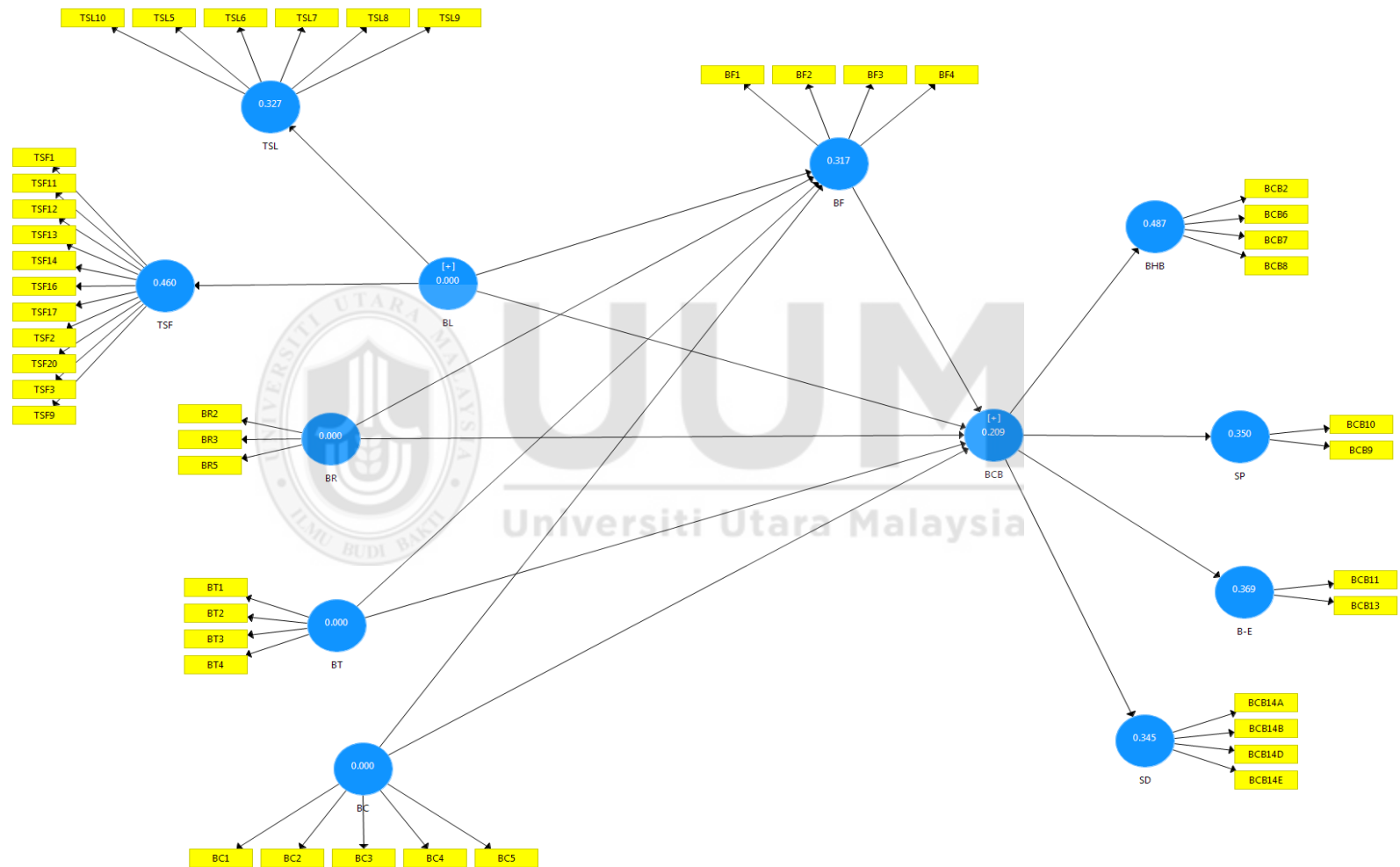


Figure 4.6  
Blindfolding Direct and Indirect Relationship

Table 4.17

*Recapitulation of the Study Findings*

<b>Hypotheses</b>	<b>Statement of Hypotheses</b>	<b>Decision</b>
H1	There is significant relationship between brand leadership and employee BCB	Supported
H2	There is significant relationship between brand reward and employee BCB	Supported
H3	There is significant relationship between brand training and employee BCB	Supported
H4	There is significant relationship between brand communication and employee BCB	Not supported
H5	There is significant relationship between brand leadership and employee brand fit	Supported
H6	There is significant relationship between brand reward and employee brand fit	Supported
H7	There is significant relationship between brand training and employee brand fit	Not Supported
H8	There is significant relationship between brand communication and employee brand fit	Supported
H9	There is significant relationship between employee brand fit and employee BCB	Supported
H10	Employee brand fit mediate the relationship between brand leadership brand employee BCB	Supported
H11	Employee brand fit mediate the relationship between brand reward and employee BCB	Supported
H12	Employee brand fit mediate the relationship between brand training and employee BCB	Not supported
H13	Employee brand fit mediate the relationship between brand communication and employee BCB	Supported

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter is focused on the discussion of the research results based on the objectives, research hypotheses, and literature review. Furthermore, the theoretical, practical contributions and implications of the research findings of this study were also discussed. In addition, limitations and directions for future research were highlighted. Lastly, the conclusion of the study was presented in this chapter.

#### **5.2 Executive Summary**

The main objective of the study is to explore the mediating effect of employee brand fit on the correlation between internal branding practices and employee BCB. More specifically, four independent variables (brand leadership, brand reward, brand training and brand communication) are hypothesized to have a significant influence on brand citizenship behavior. Similarly, employee brand fit was also hypothesized to mediate the significant relationship between internal branding practices and employee's BCB.

Based on the primary objective of this study, four objectives are stated and formulated in accordance with the research questions established from the problem statement in the preceding chapters. It is hoped that studying these relationships will provide an avenue to enhance and encourage employee BCB in the Nigeria telecommunication sector. This framework is supported by social exchange theory, which postulates that employee's



BCB is impacted by internal branding practices. In the study, thirteen hypotheses were formulated and tested using SmartPLS 3.0. The empirical results provide support for ten (10) hypotheses. From the ten hypotheses seven are direct and three are indirect or mediating hypotheses.

### **5.3 Discussion**

In this section, the focus is on the discussion of findings with regard to research questions in relation to the underpinning theories and previous results available in the literature. Consequently, the sub-sections follow in this section are named after the relevant questions that are discussed under a particular sub-heading.

#### **5.3.1 Relationship between Internal Branding Practices and Employee BCB**

The first research question and objective of the study is to investigate the significant association amongst internal branding practices namely brand leadership, brand reward, brand training, and brand communication and employee BCB. As such, four hypotheses were formulated representing the significant relationship between brand leadership and employee's BCB, brand reward and employee BCB, brand training and employee BCB, and brand communication and employee BCB.

To start with, brand leadership is viewed as the style a leader follows to encourage employees to exhibit brand-consistent behavior. Therefore, H1 posited that there is a significant connection between brand leadership and employee BCB and as postulated, the relationship was found to be significant. This empirical result is in line with the

findings of past studies that argued that brand leadership significantly influenced employee brand citizenship behavior (Shaari et al., 2015; Morhart et al., 2009; Punjaisri et al., 2013). Hence, the finding validates the hypothesis; therefore provides the answer to the respective research question. This implied that employees within the study sample are willing to exhibit BCB to become brand champion where they perceive that appropriate brand leadership is used by their leaders. Therefore, where they perceive such is lacking, it will have great impact on their willingness to exhibit BCB (Shaari et al., 2015).

Furthermore, the findings of this study has further validate the arguments of studies Morhart et al., (2009) and Shaari et al., (2015) by investigating the impact of the two styles of brand leadership namely transformational and transactional brand leadership. The finding in this study revealed that transformational brand leadership is more influential in eliciting employee BCB than transactional brand leadership. Hence, the finding is in line with the proposition and arguments of the researchers such as Shaari et al. (2015). However, with the sample in this study, the two different styles induces their willingness to exhibit positive brand behavior such BCB.

In addition, the result has provided further support to social exchange theory. The finding has indicated that as the leader employs appropriate leadership style towards the followers, the followers respond by increasing their willingness to exhibit positive consistent behavior (BCB). The reciprocal employee's behavior (BCB) is in line with SET (Blau, 1964). The theory stresses that individual employees are psychologically obligated hence obliged to positively reciprocate with positive in return (Blau, 1964).

Secondly, H2 hypothesized that brand reward has a significant relationship with employee BCB. Brand reward is considered as the reward an employee receives from the organization for engaging in brand-consistent behaviors. The result of the current study provides empirical support to the stated hypothesis; therefore, it is in line with past studies (Shaari et al., 2012). Similarly, the finding has further justified the argument put forward by Burmann et al., (2009) that strong brand commitment and brand citizenship required incentive structure to be provided to employees by the organization. Furthermore, Asha and Jyothi (2013) argued that employee commitment with the brand depends largely on compensation he/she receives. Therefore, if the employee perceives fair reward is provided by the organization, such employee will likely to be more committed. It was further argued that employees who are more committed are likely to exhibit citizenship behavior. The finding also provides further support to the argument of Nyadzayo et al., (2015) that through brand reward organization can encourage employees to be more committed and exhibit BCB.

In addition, the findings in this study has demonstrated the willingness of the study sample to exhibit BCB where they perceive fair brand reward is provided to them by the organization. In particular, respondents in this study have consider both monetary and non-monetary rewards such as empowerment, promotion and recognition to induce their positive brand behavior such as BCB. Therefore, the result is a call for the management of telecommunication companies to empower their employees, promote and recognize their employee for exhibiting brand consistent behavior so as to increase their willingness to live the brand and to be more attached to the brand.

Additionally, the finding of the study has validated social exchange theory. In line with social exchange theory, once an individual does something in favor/kind for another individual, it is expected that the other person may reciprocate with favorable return (Blau, 1964). Therefore, it is possible that the brand citizenship behavior exhibited by the respondents in the present study is an appreciation of the perceived fair reward they might have been receiving from the organization.

Furthermore, H3 states that brand training is significantly related to employee brand citizenship behavior (BCB). Therefore, it is important to note that brand training is defined as the systematic and planned effort by an organization to develop and provide employees with brand related understanding (knowledge) and skills needed to enhance their brand-consistent behavior. As expected, the results revealed a significant relationship between brand training and employee brand citizenship behavior. As such, the current finding provided an empirical support for the hypothesis and is, therefore, in line with the outcomes of other studies (Chang et al., 2012; Chiang et al., 2013). However, the finding has contradicted the findings of King and So (2013) as they reported brand-oriented training was reported to have no significant effect on brand-building behavior.

Similarly, the findings are also in line with the arguments put forward by studies that brand training is an important internal branding practice that encourages employee to exhibit positive brand behavior (Punjaisri & Wilson 2007; Papasolomou & Vrontis, 2006; Mangold & Miles, 2007; Aurand et al., 2005). In particular, Foster et al., (2010) argued

that brand training served as an encouragement to employees to remain with the organization, as such enhance positive employee brand behavior and attitude. Therefore, the sample of the study indicates that required brand training is provided to them by the organization which induced their willingness to exhibit BCB. Similarly, their ability to comprehend and understanding the brand training provided to them may be as a result of their educational background. The demographic results of the respondents has revealed that majority of the respondents had first degree, hence that has great impact on their ability to understand and apply the training provided to them while engaging for the brand.

Additionally, the finding further supports the notion of social exchange theory that when an individual receives something in favor from another individual, he or she reciprocates with a favor in return (Blau, 1964). Therefore, the citizenship behavior shown by employees might be as a result of the brand training they received from the organization.

Lastly, H4 was formulated and tested in order to attain the specified objective of this study. Hence, H4 states that there is a significant correlation between brand communication and employee's BCB. In this study, brand communication is viewed as the process that an organization follows to provide employees with brand knowledge so as to enhance their brand-consistent behavior. Contrary to expectation, the results revealed an insignificant connection between brand communication and employee's BCB. As such, the hypothesis does not provide empirical support, therefore was not supported.

In this context, the current finding significantly differs with the findings and arguments of past studies (Chiang et al., 2013; King & Grace, 2009; King & Grace, 2010; Lee et al., 2013, Burmann et al., 2009). One possible explanation for the current finding may be associated with the quality and quantity of the brand information being passed to the employees. Quality of information is determined by the usefulness, timeliness, and accuracy of the information provided to employees. It is likely that the information is not passed to the employees at the time they need. Similarly, there may be a gap between the information being passed to external stakeholders (customers) and the internal communication. This argument is further supported by Henkel et al., (2007). They argued that in order to encourage brand-consistent behavior, the brand promise communicated through mass media must be made available to employees as it guides the behaviors of the employees.

Additionally, the quantity of information might be the possible reason for the recent result in the study. Quantity of information is related to whether the information provided to employees is sufficient and if the employees feel that they are adequately informed. This argument has found support from King (2010), who argued that where employees are not provided with enough brand knowledge, they are not able to behave as desired by the organization. Furthermore, the nature of the employment of the respondents may be another reason to the insignificant result, as most of the respondents are either temporary or contract staff. This argument has also found support in the study of Giannikis and Mihail (2011) (cited by Boukis & Gounaris, 2014) that part time or contract staff are not

treated equally with full time staff, therefore, they are not adequately provided with brand knowledge.

### **5.3.2 Relationship between Internal Branding Practices and Employee Brand Fit**

The next objective of the present study is to explore the association among the four independent variables (internal branding practices) and the mediator variable. Building on equity theory (Adams, 1963), this objective formulated four hypotheses on the significant connection between brand leadership, brand reward, brand training, brand communication, and employee brand fit. In particular, H5, H6, H7, and H8 were tested to achieve the stated objective and to answer the research question. Therefore, it is expected that employees perceived that balance between their inputs and corresponding outputs from the organization such employees are said to be at fit with the brand. In addition, where the employees perceived equity or share between their values and the values of the brand then such employees are at fit with the brand.

Based on the aforementioned objective, H5 was formulated which stated that there is a significant correlation between brand leadership and employee brand fit. As expected, the outcome revealed a significant correlation between brand leadership and employee brand fit. Therefore, the result supports the stated hypothesis, as the regression result suggests that brand leadership has significant influence on employee brand fit. Hence, the result has provided support for equity theory (Adams, 1963). The theory assumes that individuals are said to be at fit by evaluating their inputs against associated outputs. Where the individual employee perceived balance between their inputs (efforts, loyalty,

skills, hard work, ability, commitment, acceptance of brand policy) and outputs (fair reward, high-quality exchange (LMX), required training) the employees may feel motivated, satisfied and fit with the organization. Furthermore, the finding has provided an empirical support to the argument of Vallaster et al., (2006) that leadership influences the alignment between individual and the corporate brand identity. Equally, the result is in consistent with the finding of (Huang, et al., 2005).

Secondly, H6 was formulated in accordance with the research question and research objective which stated that there is a significant connection between brand reward and employee brand fit. The finding has provided empirical support for H6, hence brand reward has impact on brand fit. The finding is consistent with equity theory (Adams, 1963) that suggests that individual employees evaluate their relationship with organization by balancing their inputs with the corresponding outputs. If they perceive balance between their inputs and outputs from the organization then such employees are said to be at fit with the organization. Therefore, the result shows that when an employee perceives fair brand reward is provided by the organization as compared to the inputs (efforts, abilities, commitment), such employee is said to be at fit with the organization. In addition, the finding has further validated the argument put forward by Punjaisri and Wilson (2011) that providing employee with reward/recognition could enhance the effectiveness of internal branding which is aimed at achieving alignment between the employee and the brand. Equally, the finding is consistent with the finding of Chang et al. (2012), which revealed significant relationship between brand fit and brand reward.



Furthermore, H7 was formulated in order to achieve the stated objective which states that there is a significant association between brand training and employee brand fit. Contrary to the stated hypothesis, the study does not find empirical support for the significant influence of brand training on employee brand fit. The current finding demonstrates that brand training does not directly influence employee brand fit of telecommunication in Nigeria. The finding of this study is inconsistent with the finding of (Matanda & Ndubisi, 2013). Nevertheless, the finding is consistent with the finding of Chatman (1991) as formal training was reported to have no significant impact on person-organization fit. Additionally, the findings have provided inverse support to equity theory, as the employees perceive imbalance between their inputs and corresponding outputs (required training), the employees find themselves to be in a miss-fit situation.

In addition, considering the arguments put forward by previous studies on the importance of brand training in achieving alignment between the individual employee and the brand value (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007; Punjaisri & Wilson 2011; Vallaster 2005; 2006), this may require contextual explanations for it to be responsible for this finding. One possible explanation may be related to the economic situation in Nigeria. Therefore, the telecommunication companies are compelled them reduce expenses which make them to reduce the number of times employees are able to attend training and the number of people to go for training in a year. This explanation is further supported by the argument of Boukis and Gounaris (2014) that although employees may engage into jobs that best fit their interest, skills, and abilities, as a result of changes in the work environment they may find themselves in a misfit situation.

Another possible explanation may be due to nature of employment of the respondents, as most of them are either temporary or contract staff; hence, they have no regularized employment terms. This argument has provided support to the report of the Nigerian Labor Congress (NLC) which indicates that employees in the telecommunication industry are not well-catered for and are equally not well trained because most of them are casual staff (Onyeka, 2016). All these could explain why the relationship was not significant. Equally, Giannikis and Mihail (2011) (cited by Boukis & Gounaris, 2014) argued that part time or contract staff are not treated equally with the full time staff, as such they are not well trained and that affect their fit with the organization. Therefore, considering the sample in this study majority are contract staff, hence they are not adequately trained which has significant impact on their fit with the organization.

Finally, to achieve the stated objective, H8 was formulated and tested which state that there is a significant connection between brand communication and employee brand fit. As anticipated, the present finding confirmed the hypothesis by providing empirical support. The result is also consistent with the finding of Matanda and Ndubusi (2013). Equally, the finding is in line with the argument of Boukis et al.(2014). This result, like the past results discussed in this section is also in line with equity theory (Adams, 1963). The result is significant as the employees that responded in the study view fair balance between their inputs and the corresponding outputs (brand knowledge). This finding has demonstrated that there is compatibility between the individual employee and the organization, which occurs when one party provides what the other party wants.

### **5.3.3 Relationship between Employee Brand fit and Employee BCB**

The third research question and objective in the present study is to investigate the connection between employee brand fit and employee's BCB. In order to achieve this, H9 was formulated which state that there is a significant correlation between employee brand fit and employee's BCB. As expected the finding of the study revealed a significant correlation between employee brand fit and employee BCB. In other words, the result provided empirical support for the hypothesis. Hence, the finding is consistent with previous studies (Helm et al., 2016; Tugal & Kilic, 2015; Boukis et al., 2014; Vondey, 2008; Yaniv & Farkas, 2005; Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001). In addition, the result has indicated that employees of telecommunication are fit with the organization which has affected their willingness to put extra effort in achieving brand goal. In particular, this may be as a result of their ability to comprehend and understand their roles and responsibilities as a brand representatives considering their educational background.

Similarly, the finding of this study is consistent with equity theory (Adams, 1963), which state that when a person perceives balance between his or her inputs and the corresponding outputs from the organization such person may be satisfied and motivated to engage in a behavior that may benefit the organization. Therefore, the respondents in this study perceived that their inputs equate the outputs they receive from the organization and as such they engage in BCB.

#### **5.3.4 Mediating Effect of Employee Brand Fit on the Significant Relationship between Internal Branding Practices and Employee BCB**

The fourth objective of the current study is to explore the mediating effect of employee brand fit on the significant connection between internal branding practices and employee BCB. To achieve this objective, four hypotheses were formulated and tested using bootstrapping method (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). In particular, H10, H11, H12 and H13 were tested in order to determine the mediating effect of employee brand fit.

In order to attain the mediation objective, H10 was formulated and tested which states that employee brand fit mediates the significant relationship between brand leadership and employee BCB. Remarkably, the result indicates that employee brand fit mediates the significant relationship between brand leadership and employee brand citizenship behavior. Hence, H10 is supported. In other words, brand leadership was found to have an impact on employee BCB via the mediating effect of employee brand fit. Therefore, this has indicated that the effect of brand leadership on employee's willingness to exhibit BCB depend to some extent their fit with the organization.

Based on this finding, using appropriate brand leadership will help the organization to achieve alignment between brand values and individual employee's value and will then encourage employee to engage in BCB. The fact that the mediating effect of employee brand fit is considered to be the major contribution of the recent study, the questions of why and how the mediation took place can be best answered theoretically. Therefore, the

finding has given empirical support to equity theory (Adams, 1963) in the sense that when employee's perceived balance between their inputs and the corresponding outputs it will serve as motivation to exhibit positive brand behavior (BCB). In other words, employee's inputs (abilities, skills, loyalty, and commitment) are perceived to be rewarded by outputs such as appropriate brand leadership (high-quality exchange) such will motivate them to exhibit BCB.

Furthermore, to achieve the stated objective, H11 was formulated and tested which states that employee brand fit mediates the significant correlation between brand reward and employee BCB. As expected, the result established that employee brand fit mediates the relationship between brand reward and employee BCB. As such, H11 is also supported. Therefore, brand reward was found to affect employee BCB via the mediating role of employee brand fit.

In the same vein, the finding shows that providing employees with fair brand reward increases their brand fit which in turn enhance their brand citizenship behavior. Moreover, this finding indicates that telecommunication companies can use brand reward to enhance employee brand fit which serves as an encouragement to employees to exhibit brand citizenship behavior. Similarly, the present result is supported by equity theory (Adams, 1963), which holds that a balance between individual inputs and organizational outputs serves as a motivation to exhibit positive behavior. Therefore, when individual employees perceive that their inputs (abilities, skills, commitment) are fairly rewarded, the employee will be motivated to exhibit brand citizenship behavior.

Additionally, H12 was formulated and tested in order to achieve the stated objective which states that employee brand fit mediates the significant connection between brand training and employee BCB. The statistical result indicates that employee brand fit does not mediate the association between brand training and employee BCB. The result, however, is not surprising based on the fact that the path between brand training and employee brand fit was not supported. Therefore, H12 is not supported. A possible explanation to this is the respondents perceived that their inputs are greater than the output (brand training) which demotivates them which are deemed to be not encouraging from them to exhibit BCB. As argued by Boukis and Gounaris (2014) employees in an organization evaluate their brand fit by balancing their inputs and the associated outputs which serve as a motivation to put extra efforts (BCB) in achieving organizational goals. Therefore, because brand training is perceived not to be adequately provided the respondents are in a misfit situation which demotivates them to exhibit BCB. Moreover, Walster, Berscheid, & Walster, (1973) argued that where employee perceives an imbalance between their output with the corresponding input, the employee will be demotivated. As such, the employee has three decisions to make either to reduce his/her output, engage in negative behavior or disengage his/her services.

Furthermore, to achieve the fourth objective stated earlier, H13 was tested which states that employee brand fit mediates the connection between brand communication and employee BCB. However, in this study, brand communication did not significantly affect employee BCB directly, but it has a direct impact on employee brand fit. Interestingly, the result indicates that brand communication influences employee BCB through

employee brand fit. In other words, the relationship has a good magnitude and is significant due to mediation role of employee brand fit. Therefore, the result of this study shows that the effect of brand communication is better understood through the mediation role of employee brand fit. As such, H13 is supported.

In this case, the result demonstrates that telecommunication Company's ability to provide employee with brand knowledge improves their brand fit which in turn motivate or encourage the employees to exhibit BCB. The finding is also in agreement with past studies (Burmam et al., 2009; Chiang et al., 2013) which show that brand communication is related to employee BCB through some mediating variables. Regarding the current study, the result supports the equity theory (Adams, 1963) which suggests that brand fit is achieved as a result of balancing individual employee's inputs and organizational outputs which motivates the employee to engage in positive behavior. To this end, the result suggests that brand knowledge is needed by employees to be at fit with the brand, which would serve as an encouragement to exhibit BCB.

#### **5.4 Implications and Future Research Directions**

The results of the current study have some important implications for theoretical, methodological, and organizational management and practice. Therefore, these implications are discussed in the subsequent sub-sections.

#### **5.4.1 Theoretical Implications**

The findings of the study have provided further insights into equity theory (Adams, 1963). The theory assumes that individuals assess their relationships by balancing their inputs with the corresponding outputs from the organization. As such the theory was built on the belief that individuals may be motivated if they perceive balance between their inputs and outputs from the organization. The findings of the study consequently confirmed and extended equity theory (Adams, 1963) by revealing employee BCB through the mechanics of internal branding practices and employee brand fit. In other words, when employees perceive a balance between their inputs (such as abilities, skills, commitment, compliance with brand policies) with outputs from the organization (such fair brand reward, appropriate brand leadership style, and brand communication) the employees will be motivated to engage in BCB. As such, the findings of this study have validated the argument of Pritchard, (1969) that when an individual perceives balance between their inputs and outputs from the organization, such individual may feel satisfied, motivated and more committed and exert extra efforts (BCB) in achieving organizational goals.

Furthermore, regarding the mediational relationship between internal branding practices and employee BCB, the literature has indicated that past studies have demonstrated significant mediational relationships between internal branding practices and employee's BCB (Shaari et al., 2012; 2015; Burmann et al., 2009). Nonetheless, the recent study has theoretically provided new knowledge about mediation by showing that internal branding practices have significant effect on employee BCB through employee brand fit. Hence,



this study has pushed the boundary of knowledge forward by providing the empirical indication of the influence of employee brand fit to significantly mediate the relationship between internal branding practices and employee BCB. As such, the present study has validated the significant impact of internal branding practices on employee BCB as demonstrated in past studies (Shaari et al., 2012; 2015; Morhart et al., 2009; King & So, 2013; Burmann et al., 2009).

In addition, past studies on employee BCB have investigated the impact of a number of internal branding practices on BCB (Shaari et al., 2012; Morhart et al., 2009; Burmann et al., 2009; Chang et al., 2012; Shaari et al., 2015). Nonetheless, the combination of brand leadership, brand reward, brand training and brand communication, employee brand fit and employee BCB in a single model has received less or little attention. As such, the structural relationships between these practices as they influence employee's BCB are examined in a single model. The findings show that brand leadership, brand reward and brand training have a significant impact on employee BCB. In addition, the present study has contributed to theory and literature of internal branding and employee brand fit. In particular, the study has for the first time, proven a significant directional correlation between brand leadership and employee brand fit; which to the best of the researcher's knowledge such is missing in the literature as other studies were basically qualitative in nature (Burmann & Zeplin, 2005; Vallaster & de Chernatony, 2005).

Additionally, the findings of this study have extended and found further support to the SET (Blau, 1964). SET (Blau, 1964) assumes that in order to achieve relationships, the

parties involved must have the sense of mutual benefits from each other. Based on the theory, the present study has been able to found that providing employees with appropriate brand leadership style, brand reward and brand training enhance their willingness to engage in BCB. In other words, when employees perceive that the organization has provided them with appropriate brand leadership, brand reward and brand training the employees may feel obliged to exhibit BCB in exchange. Therefore, the study has extended the boundary of knowledge by providing the empirical indication of the influence of internal branding practices on employee's BCB in an African context.

Consequently, most of the studies on internal branding practices and employee BCB were conducted in Europe and Asian countries. Therefore, conducting this study in countries such as Nigeria with multi-ethnic, multi-linguistic, multi religion and most populated country in the African continent, the literature regarding internal branding practices-BCB is bound to be enriched. As such, the present study is a worthy contribution towards the literature as it has discovered a relationship between internal branding practices and employee BCB in Nigeria's context. Subsequently, the study has provided an added demographic base for comparative research and validation with regard to the connection between internal branding practices and employee BCB.

Similarly, this study is an addition to the present internal branding practices-BCB literature. Considering the period of time the studies began and number of the studies found in the literature, the study has contributed by investigating the significant relationship between internal branding practices and employee BCB. A review of

literature has revealed only a few internal branding practices-BCB studies (Shaari et al., 2012; 2015; Burmann et al., 2009; King & So, 2013). Additionally, besides studies such as Shaari et al., (2012; 2015), other studies were conducted on front-line employees. This study is among the few studies conducted on both frontline and backstage employee. Hence, there are other the theoretical relationships between internal branding practices and employee BCB which have remained unexplained especially in countries like Nigeria in which such similar study was not conducted.

#### **5.4.2 Managerial Implications**

The present finding has contributed to the management in three ways. First the study has revealed the importance of internal branding practice. Secondly this study revealed the importance of employee brand fit. Lastly it has revealed the importance of employee brand fit as a significant mediating variable on internal branding practices and employee BCB.

In the first place, the facts that this study has provided an empirical indication that certain internal branding practice are positively associated to employee brand fit and employee BCB, managers in an organization can take a cue and develop these practices. Therefore, it is significant for the management to realize the impact of internal branding practices for employee positive consequences such as brand fit and BCB. It is crucial for the management of telecommunication companies should prioritize, promote, and improve internal branding practices in their organization.

Specifically, the findings of this study benefit the telecommunication management as it revealed the significant impact of brand leadership on employee BCB. Therefore, it is important for the management to realize the influence of brand leadership styles on employee BCB. Similarly, to encourage BCB, the managers should also display consistent brand behaviors as they are considered as role models and provide support by acting as a coach and mentor (Morhart et al., 2009). In addition, brand reward was revealed to have a significant impact on employee BCB, therefore management of telecommunication should creatively and consistently reward and recognize employees that exhibit brand-consistent behavior. As such, providing employees with both monetary and non-monetary brand rewards (such as empowerment, promotion, and recognition) is found to be highly important to motivate employees to exhibit BCB.

Furthermore, brand training was found to have great impact on employee BCB. Hence, telecommunication companies should provide their employees with required and adequate brand training in order to encourage BCB. The study highlighted the importance of brand training to employees as it provides them with better understanding of brand and skills needed to perform their roles and responsibilities as brand representatives which serve as a motivator to exhibit BCB. Therefore, management can influence employee's attitude and behavior with correct application of brand training in an internal branding process (Punjaisri & Wilson, 2007).

Furthermore, the present study has revealed the importance of employee brand fit that stimulates employees to perform BCB. Hence, this result presents an additional important

clue for the management of telecommunication to grasp and utilize in encouraging and enhancing BCB among employees. Management of the telecommunication companies must appreciate the impact of employee brand fit, thus, enhance its development and sustainability amongst all their employees. This suggests that organization should ensure that the employee inputs are fairly rewarded in order to encourage positive brand behavior such as BCB.

Thirdly, this study has statistically discovered the significance of employee brand fit as a significant mediating factor for transferring the impact of internal branding practices (brand leadership, brand reward, brand training, and brand communication) to employee BCB. Therefore, it is important for the management to improve their internal branding practices so as to enhance employee fit with the organization, in order to encourage them to be more committed and loyal to the brand. A review of literature has shown that the greater the level of brand fit the more possible employee is to engage in extra-role behavior in order to achieve brand goals (Lauver & Kristof-Brown, 2001).

In addition, as stated in the previous sections, developing and stimulating employee to have a sense of belonging and feeling of attachment to the organization's brand can be achieved through the acts of reciprocity and social exchange (Blau, 1964), in addition to balancing employee's inputs and corresponding outputs (Adams, 1963). Therefore, for organizations to produce and sustain positive employee outcomes such as brand fit and BCB, management should accept and adopt the teachings of both SET (Blau, 1964) in addition to equity theory (Adams, 1963). This can be realized by having effective internal

branding practices which stimulate reciprocal actions from employees to exhibit brand citizenship behavior.

In conclusion, the study has identified that brand leadership, brand reward, brand training and brand communication are critical practices to be used to encourage employees to be at fit with the organization's brand and to exhibit brand citizenship behavior. Therefore, they should be viewed as important practices which directly enhance employee brand fit and influence employee BCB. As such, for successful brand management that is geared toward achieving competitive advantage, telecommunication companies should focus on these internal branding practices in order to enhance brand fit and BCB.

### **5.5 Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research**

Despite several contributions given by the present study in theoretical, methodological and also practical aspects, as in many other studies, the study is without limitations which need to be identified. Moreover, the limitations may serve as a direction for further research. In particular, one of the major limits of this study is the cross sectional nature in which the data were obtained over a single time period from telecommunication companies. Therefore, caution should be applied when drawing causal inferences. Therefore, future research may address this limitation by conducting a longitudinal study that involves collecting data over two or more points of time, so as to compare and contrast the findings of this study to be able to draw cause-effect interference appropriately.

Secondly, common method variance is another possible limitation of the present study (Podsakoff et al., 2003). However, using Harman's single factor analysis to test the common method bias, it is considered that the study is free from this problem. But nevertheless, future study can obtain data from many participants (employees, managers/supervisors) independently in order to minimize the measurement errors.

Thirdly, the present study adopted a quantitative method and solely relies on one single method of data collection. In other words, the study used questionnaire as an instrument of gathering data. As such, there is a possibility that the respondents may not be willing to answer questions correctly. Hence, the responses may not be consistently/correctly measure the study variables/constructs. Therefore, forthcoming studies may combine together these methods (quantitative and qualitative) to carry out an in-depth investigation on employee BCB in Nigeria. Specifically, studies can employ the use of interview or observation in addition to the use of questionnaire so as to acquire data to explore the relationship between the internal branding practices and employee BCB.

Fourthly, the studies of employee BCB were mostly conducted in Europe and Asia countries (Shaari et al., 2012; 2015; Helm et al., 2016; Burmann et al., 2005; 2009; Morhart et al., 2009). Thus, more studies need to be conducted across the globe, specifically in African countries in order to further validate the construct. Furthermore, the scope of the study may also be another constraint that requires being addressed by forthcoming research. As such, forthcoming study may need to replicate the findings in various settings so as to extend the generalization.

## **5.6 Conclusion**

The main objective of the present study is to explore the mediating effect of employee brand fit on the connection between internal branding practice and employee BCB. The empirical findings supported 10 out of 13 hypotheses formulated; therefore, answering all the research questions despite some identified limitations. Also the findings give support to key theoretical positions upon which the study has been drawn. Similarly, the results in the recent study are consistent with the number of previous studies conducted.

Specifically, internal branding practices such as brand leadership, brand reward, and brand training were found to have a significant positive impact on employee BCB. However, brand communication was revealed to have no effect on employee BCB. Furthermore, employee brand fit was revealed to mediate the relationship between internal branding practices such as brand leadership, brand reward, and brand communication, and employee BCB. Nevertheless, the findings revealed no mediation effect of employee brand fit on the connection between brand training and employee BCB.



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## APPENDIX A

### ACADEMIC RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE



### SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Research Title: The internal branding practices and employee brand citizenship behavior: The mediating effect of employee brand fit.

Objective: To investigate the mediating role of employee brand fit on the relationship between brand leadership, brand reward, brand training, brand communication and brand citizenship behavior of Telecommunication industry in Nigeria.

Target: Employees of MTN, Glo, Airtel, Etislat, Vodafone and Multilinks

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire is designed purposely for academic research. It is meant to aid the student in data collection that can satisfy the requirement for award of PhD degree in Marketing. The questionnaire is designed in order to source data for testing the relationship among factors in your brand, namely: internal branding practices (brand leadership, brand reward, brand training, and brand communication), employee brand fit, and brand citizenship behavior (BCB). Your responses will be treated strictly as confidential and, therefore, your identity is not required.

Thank you in anticipation of cooperation and assistance.

Lawi Adamu (900171)

Student

## SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC

Instructions: please tick appropriate box and fill in your answer at the blank space.

1. Your brand

MTN ☐

ETISLAT ☐

GLO ☐

VODAFONE ☐

AIRTEL ☐

MULTILINKS ☐

2. Do you have direct contact with the organization's customer?

☐ Yes

☐ No

3. Job status

☐ Permanent

☐ Temporary

☐ Contract

☐ Others

(specify).....

4. Working experience

10 years and above ☐

5 – 10 years ☐

1 – 5 years ☐

Less than 1 year ☐

5. Highest educational background

- Doctorate Degree ☐
- Masters Degree ☐
- First Degree ☐
- Diploma/NCE/etc. ☐
- Secondary school certificate ☐
- Others (specify).....

6. Which department/unit do you work for?

- Sales and distribution ☐
- Customer relations ☐
- Engineering/technical ☐
- Human resources ☐
- Security ☐
- Agency ☐
- Others..... ☐

INSTRUCTION: Answer the entire question by ticking the number that best reflects your perception and feeling based on the scale **1 = Strongly disagree** and **7 = Strongly agree**.

**Section B: Brand Leadership**

S/NO	STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	My leader will..... Re-examine the brand promise and question whether is delivered appropriate.							
2	Asks for different perspectives when interpreting the organization's brand values.							
3	Get me to look at my job in terms of a branding task.							
4	Recommend a brand promoter's perspective on how to							



28	Tell me what I should do to be rewarded for my efforts for brand-consistent behavior.							
29	Spells out agreement with me on what to receive if I behave in line with our standards for brand-consistent behavior.							
30	Talks about special rewards for ideal behavior as a brand representative							

### SECTION C: Brand Reward

S/NO	STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	My organization provides better incentives and rewards at all levels for service quality delivery, not just productivity.							
2	My organization gives freedom and authority to individual employee to act independently for delivery of brand promise.							
3	How much I champion the organization's brand depends on how much I am rewarded.							
4	My organization provides training to employees that enhance their ability to deliver the brand promise.							
5	Promotions in this organization depend on whether the employee behaves in accordance with brand identity and enhance brand image.							

### SECTION D: Brand Training

S/NO	STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	My organization makes new and potential employees understanding brand-related values and spirit through training							
2	My organization through training courses makes individual employee values and behaviors consistent with the values of the brand.							
3	My organization through training provides the employees with skills to make them produce positive brand-consistent behavior.							
4	My organization encourages me to come up with the new and better suggestions on how to do things.							

### SECTION E: Brand Communication

S/NO	STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	My organization communicates to us brand-related spirits, content, and values while developing new products.							
2	My organization do transmits brand values to employees							

	through various kinds of informal channels.							
3	My organization do transmits brand values to employees through various kinds of formal channels.							
4	My organization often transmits brand values toward stakeholders through interaction of employees and stakeholders such as customers and suppliers.							
5	My organization regularly assesses the impact of brand communication.							

#### SECTION F: Employee Brand Fit

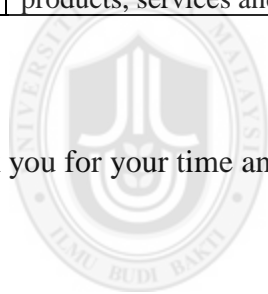
S/NO	STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	I feel that my personal values are a good fit with this organization.							
2	My organization has the same values as I do with regard to concern to others.							
3	My organization has the same values as I do with regard to honesty.							
4	My organization has the same values as I do with regard to fairness.							

#### SECTION G: Brand Citizenship Behavior

S/NO	STATEMENT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	My attitude towards customers and other colleagues is positive.							
2	I am always friendly to organization's customers and other colleagues.							
3	I always help customers and other colleagues.							
4	I always put myself in the position of customers and other colleagues in order to know their views and problems.							
5	I always take responsibility even outside my own area of competency if necessary.							
6	I always consider the consequences of what I say and act on the organization's brand image.							
7	I act in accordance with the brand identity even when I'm not controlled by anyone.							
8	I take special care of my work and quality of my work outcome, if it has a positive impact on organization's brand identity.							
9	I complain frequently on the effort that is made to generate							

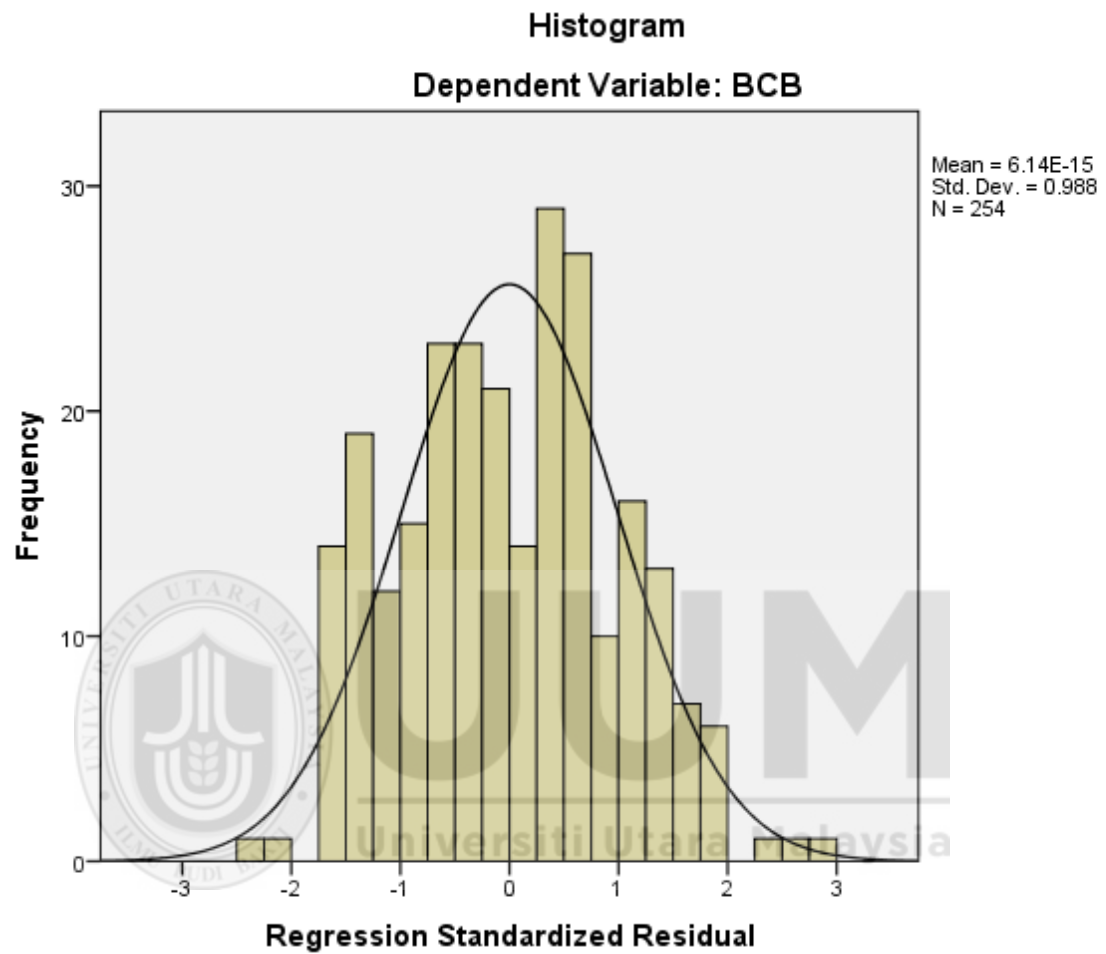
	positive brand image.								
10	I express frequently the difficulties and annoying roles and responsibilities of my jobs.								
11	I am ready to stay with this organization, even if better offer (more salary) comes from other competitors.								
12	I would always recommend this brand to others (friends, acquaintances, and relatives) also in private conversations.								
13	I would try to convey our brand identity to new employees (e.g. either in informal conversation or through assuming a mentor role.								
	In order to satisfy the customer's expectations towards organization's brand....								
14a	I ask my other co-workers actively for feedback								
14b	I work hard to develop expertise by reading professional journals, manuals and other related guidebooks.								
14c	I always report customers complain or internal problems directly to person concern								
14d	I take initiative regularly to participate in training.								
14e	I take initiatives to come up with new ideas for new products, services and process improvement								

Thank you for your time and patience.



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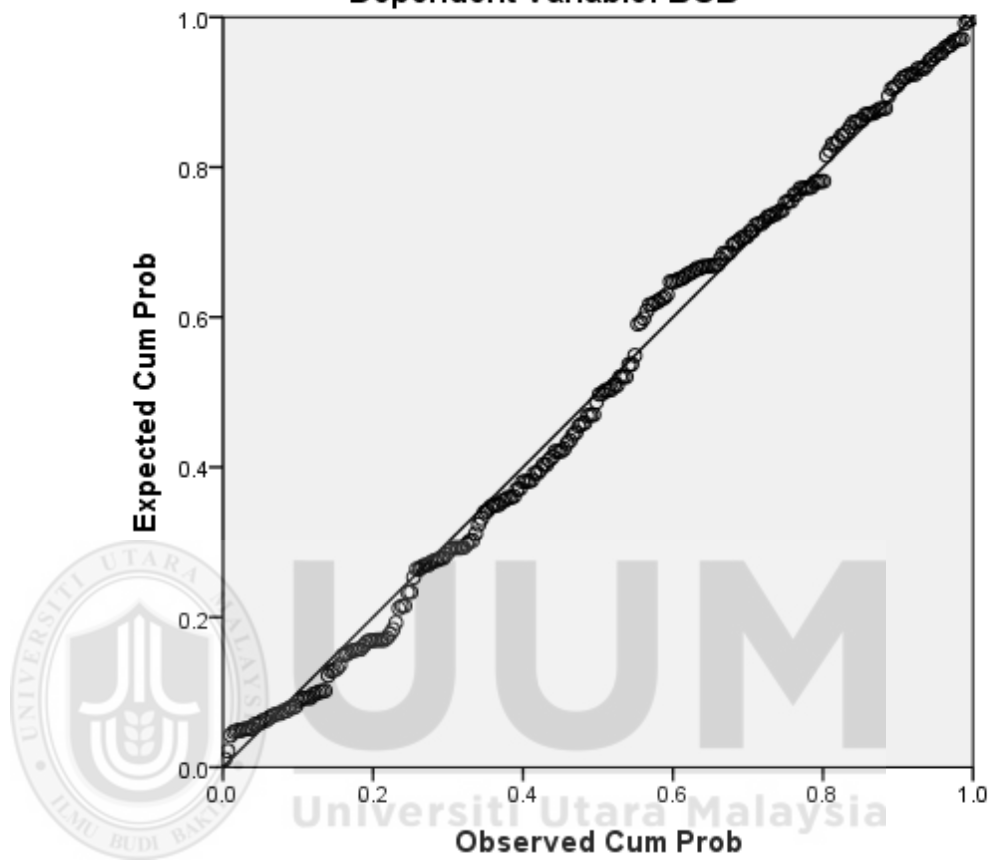
## APPENDIX B

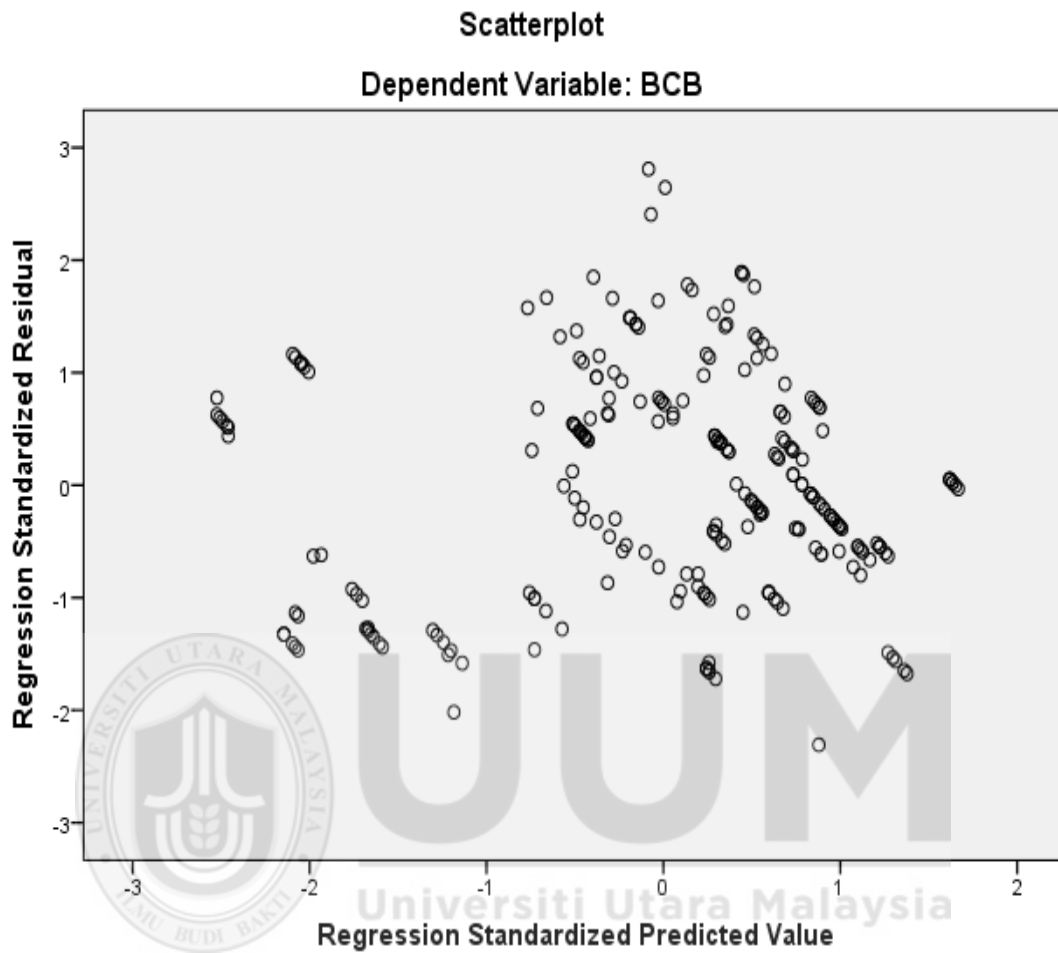




### Normal P-P Plot of Regression Standardized Residual

Dependent Variable: BCB





## APPENDIX C

**Correlations**

		TSF	TSL	BR	BT	BC	BF
TSF	Pearson Correlation	1	.660**	.701**	.466**	-.343**	.578**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	254	254	254	254	254	254
TSL	Pearson Correlation	.660**	1	.563**	.562**	-.475**	.476**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	254	254	254	254	254	254
BR	Pearson Correlation	.701**	.563**	1	.479**	-.364**	.532**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	254	254	254	254	254	254
BT	Pearson Correlation	.466**	.562**	.479**	1	-.616**	.326**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	254	254	254	254	254	254
BC	Pearson Correlation	-.343**	-.475**	-.364**	-.616**	1	-.152*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.015
	N	254	254	254	254	254	254
BF	Pearson Correlation	.578**	.476**	.532**	.326**	-.152*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.015	
	N	254	254	254	254	254	254

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

## APPENDIX D

